#159
May 2026

The CRAZY WISDOM Monthly

Sheriff Alyshia Dyer

Her Mission: Compassion in the Age of ICE

Find the story on Page 8

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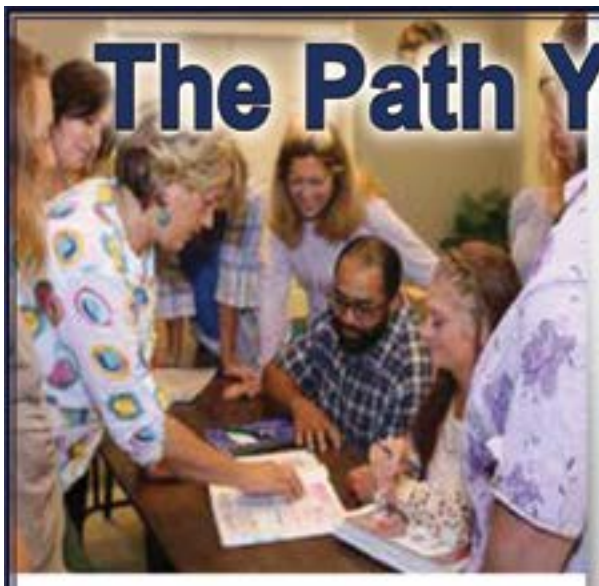

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Born during the pandemic, *The Crazy Wisdom Monthly* seeks to represent the voices of our community in a timely and entertaining manner. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, poetry, breathing exercises, beautiful art and photos, favorite places for walks, news announcements, or musings on current events. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.

Word of the Month

Noctilucent

Emitting a cold, pale glow in the darkness; quietly luminous.

Receive our Weekly E-blasts which feature events at at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore, the latest issues of the *CW Monthly our* digital online magazine, *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal*, and more!

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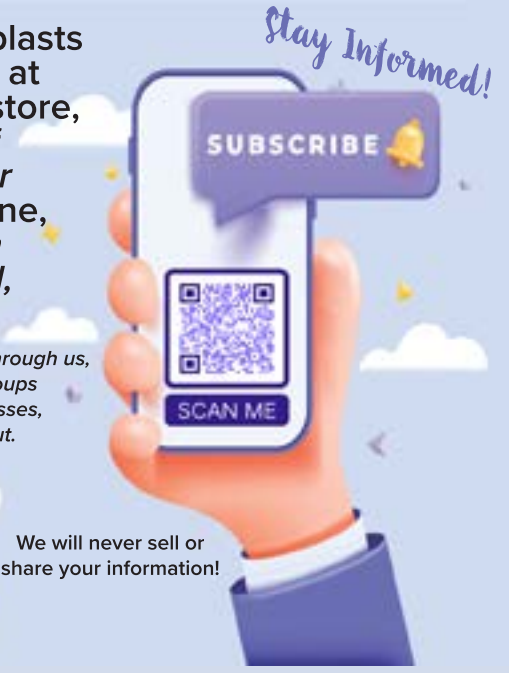

Contents

issue #159

06 CWJ Book Picks of the Month

07 Mothering
BY KATHERINE MUNTER

08 New Sheriff In Town, Mission Compassion
By Bill Smith and Anna Gersh

10 THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY CALENDAR
LOCAL EVENTS, CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, AND RETREATS

16 A Conversation with Ginger Pie
BY PEGGY RIVER SINGER

21 Community Spotlight
BY LYNDA GRONLUND

28 Spring cooking--All About Asparagus
BY LISA VIGER-GOTTE

29 Slow Food Farm
BY SANDOR SLOMOVITS

32 Circle Pines Center
BY PETULA BROWN

35 Kids in the Community: Experiencing Spring Through the Senses
BY CHRISTINE MACINTYRE

On the Cover

Washtenaw County Sheriff, Alyshia Dyer. Photo taken by Hilary Nichols.

Our spring/ summer issue is here!

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

Features

issue 92

• Keeping the Faith • Architectural Resource • Summer Road Trip • Plants and Breath • Hypermobility...and more!

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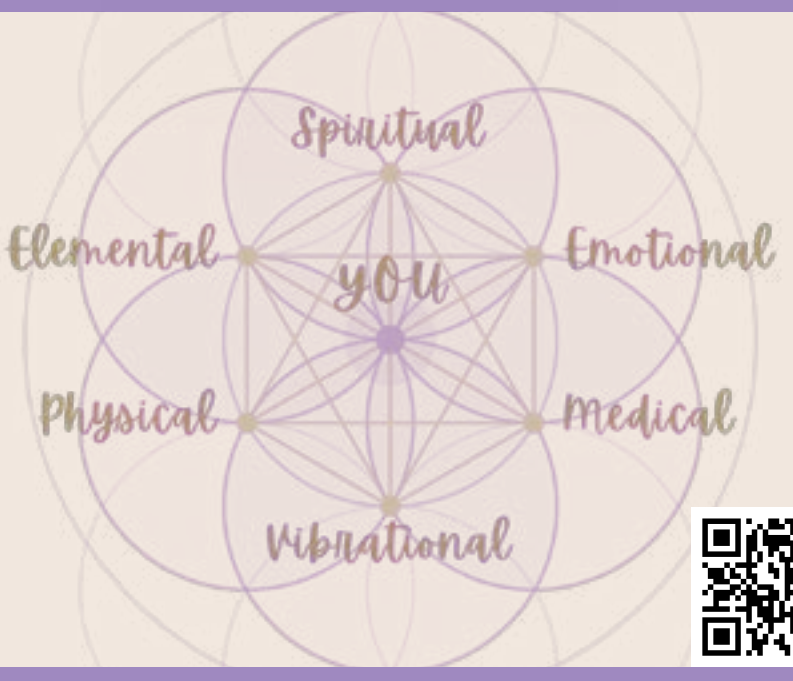

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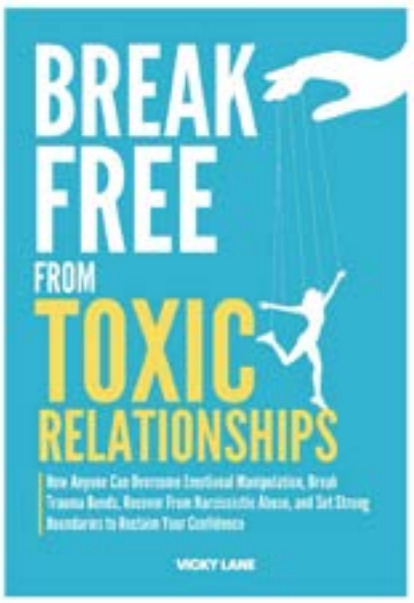
CW Book Picks *of the month*



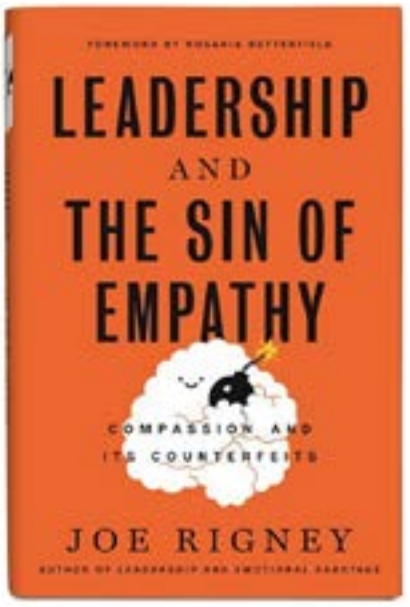
Reclaim Your Life from Toxic Relationships—Break Free, Heal, and Thrive

Do you feel emotionally drained rather than fulfilled in your relationship? Have you struggled to tell the difference between love and manipulation? Are you searching for a way to rebuild your confidence and find lasting peace?

If so, you're not alone. Many people bear the invisible scars of emotional abuse, gaslighting, and manipulation, feeling trapped and uncertain about how to break free. But here's the truth—healing is possible, and you have the strength to reclaim your life.

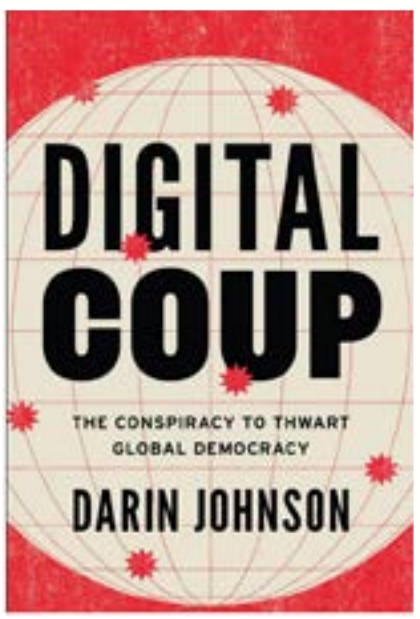
This compassionate and empowering guide provides a clear, step-by-step path to help you recognize toxic patterns, set firm boundaries, and rebuild your self-worth. Whether you've felt powerless for years or are just beginning to question your relationship, this book offers the insights, tools, and support you need to move forward with confidence.
Inside, You'll Discover:

- How to identify red flags early in new relationships—before it's too late
- The secret to setting strong, unshakable boundaries—without guilt.
- Proven techniques to break free from manipulation, gaslighting, and control.
- How to cultivate self-compassion, release guilt, and begin your healing journey.
- Mindfulness strategies to manage overwhelming emotions and regain clarity.
- Steps to recognize and break free from trauma bonds—once and for all.
- Spiritual and emotional guidance tailored to different faiths and beliefs.
- Inspiring real-life stories of individuals who successfully reclaimed their lives.
- Practical, legal, and emotional strategies for safely leaving an abusive relationship.
- A roadmap to building a strong, supportive network—even when you feel isolated.



The so-called virtue of empathy is the greatest rhetorical tool of manipulation in the 21st century. Because love is a real virtue, empathy's power is in posing as selfless care for victims. A sad polar bear paces as David Attenborough informs you that the family suburban is melting the ice caps. "Jesus was an asylum seeker!" the sign reads at an Open Borders Rally. A forlorn Bruno wishes he too could change in the women's locker room, a place he's always known he belonged. "My mom said if we don't go she'll be just devastated." When you reject the sin of empathy, you reject the manipulation of the media, the manipulation of family and friends, and most importantly, the manipulation of your own heart.

Leadership and the Sin of Empathy examines how empathy in modern life often functions as a persuasive tool that shapes public emotion and personal choices by presenting itself as noble care for the vulnerable. It explains how the assumed virtue of empathy gains influence by imitating the real virtue of love while guiding readers through vivid examples. This book encourages readers to develop clarity of heart by understanding how emotional manipulation can arise from voices in the media, from social circles, and from within one's own inner life.



The rise of AI and misinformation warfare is leading to racial and political polarization and democratic erosion on a global level.

We are at a unique period in world history. While advances in digital technology have brought the world closer than ever, they have also been used as tools of oppression, driving misinformation and deepening divisions. AI-generated propaganda, radicalization pipelines, and profit-driven algorithms are reshaping political landscapes, often without our awareness. How did we get here, and what can we do?

In Digital Coup, international lawyer, professor, and former national security professional Darin Johnson uses his expertise to explore how AI-driven disinformation and social media echo chambers unravel truth, deepen societal divisions, and erode democracy. Johnson walks us through the digital battleground where tech companies monetize political anxieties and extremists weaponize misinformation. He introduces us to the shadowy networks trafficking in data and disinformation, showing how AI's power is being wielded to manipulate, polarize, and exploit. This world, he argues, is shaped both by those who engineer these systems and by those who refuse to challenge them.

With clear-eyed urgency, Johnson dismantles the myth of a neutral internet and calls for a radical rethinking of our digital future. Digital Coup is a vital intervention, offering both a wake-up call and a vision for a more informed, united, and accountable online world.

Mothering

By Katherine Munter

"We are born of love; love is our mother." -Rumi

The first person who called me "Mom," was born over half a century before me.

His name was Raymond. Deemed unable to make his own decisions, he became an adult ward of the state after his parents and close relatives passed. Unlike a child who learns whom to call mother, Ray asked my permission. When I paused, he explained with choppy speech and teary eyes that he missed his mom and knew it was pretend.

Every morning when I arrived at work, Ray was waiting for me by the front window. "Mom!" he'd excitedly call with a wave, always bringing a smile to my face as we began our day together. He'd accompany me as I walked through the facility, sharing stories of his life.

Ray grew up on a farm in the 1920s. He was never sent to school, as he was labeled, in his words,"not smart enough." As he watched his siblings leave with bags of books, he considered himself lucky to be able to stay home and spend time with his mother. Though hands were always needed on the farm, Ray didn't work in the fields; his father was concerned he might be injured by the heavy equipment. Instead, Ray spent his early days listening to the gentle lowing of the cows and the rustle of wind blowing through the wheat field. He taught me that cows are warm— a soothing warmth that can heat a barn even through the chill of winter.

When it came time to harvest wheat, Ray helped lay the stalks onto a canvas tarp. His mother showed him how to hit the bundles with a stick to separate the tender grains. Together, they'd take the wheat kernels to the grist mill and then return home with bags of precious flour. Ray recalled his mother's hands as she expertly kneaded the flour into dough, and he'd laugh as he remembered his own sticky fingers. They used a cast iron wood stove, which warmed the entire kitchen. Though there wasn't a reliable temperature gauge, Ray said they knew the bread was done by the comforting smell that wafted through the space: grainy caramel with just a hint of smoke.

One rainy morning, I arrived at work, and Ray wasn't waiting at the window. My heart caught in my chest as I rushed to the nurse's station. With tears welling in her eyes, she told me he had passed suddenly during the night. I returned to his window, almost expecting him to be there. Rather, I found myself drawn to stand in his spot and look out through the water droplets, across the parking lot, to the woods beyond. I was relieved that he no longer felt lonely and yet felt the weight of my own loneliness grow. Open palm and forehead against the cool glass, I silently said goodbye.

Several years ago, I decided to try planting a small plot of wheat. I pressed the seeds into the chilly autumn soil, pondering how each tiny beginning possessed all of the knowledge it needed to thrive. I watched the daily changes as the grasses reached toward the sun. After harvesting and drying the stalks, my daughters and I placed bundles into pillowcases and danced on them to encourage the seeds to separate. A sweet, earthy smell tickled our noses as dust billowed around us. Pouring the grains onto a sheet, we grabbed corners and bounced the wheat berries into the air. The wind grabbed the outer chaff and carried it away.

Some people stick with us, their lessons slowly unfolding over time. In asking me to take care of him, Ray also took care of something in me. I learned to nurture and offer space to grow, both to others as well as to myself. Decades later, when I hear the whispers of wind through tall grass, I remember him, smile, and feel my heart gently warming.

During this month when we honor those who mother, my thoughts are carried to all those who supported me and encouraged me to grow. In what ways can you nurture yourself and others?

Dr. Katherine Munter, clinical psychologist, art therapist, and founder of Creative Life Therapy, an Ann Arbor practice of art therapy and integrative wellbeing. Learn more at www.CreativeLifeTherapy.com.

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NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN, MISSION COMPASSION

OUR NEW MISSION: COMPASSION

CW: Everyone is talking about what's new at the Sheriff's office. The word compassion keeps coming up. Tell us about your new mission.

AD: Compassion is a core concept for me. I am a millennial woman serving as sheriff, which is new to our county. I bring a different perspective to the table. I come from a policy mindset and a social work mindset. Also, having been a road patrol deputy, I have on-the-ground experience which is unique. My identity matters, my lived experience helps me assess situations in a different way.

We are committed to building a safer, more just, and more compassionate county. Compassion is in our mission statement. We're trying to bring more compassion into policing, into the legal system, and into the jail.

When the jails were built, there wasn't much sense of compassion. The system was built to make money. It was built off the backs of the most vulnerable in our communities. We've made some progress, but we have a long way to go.

When I was running, I went across the county and talked to people. I talked to everyone. We took that information in and put it into our platform. That became my agenda, it was the community's agenda.

Everyone has different values. I worked for Jerry Clayton my whole career. I saw what worked and what didn't. We're continuing the good things but adding our new vision. The previous administration started having deputies carry Naloxone, an opioid blocker. It is critical to keep that going. We're continuing the community violence intervention work. We're continuing SURE Moms, peer support for mothers of youth in the juvenile justice system. We really want to address first responder PTSD so we will continue building mental health and wellness initiatives for employees.

But bringing in a new vision means we're taking a harder look at where we can take policy change a step further to truly create a county legal system without high racial disparities. Compassion means a county system focused on family reunification—finding a way that people in jail can actually see their loved ones.

Small things are important too. We have changed policies to curb low level traffic stops. We don't need our deputies pulling people over for a crack in the windshield, a loud muffler, or even air freshener. My goal is to make everything safer. We need the community to be a partner thinking beyond 911 or police help. People may assume the answer is more enforcement presence. The question to ask is, "What would prevent this from happening again?" Part of our values are thinking innovatively. What actually may help is redesign of the roadways: adding curbs, putting sidewalks in, maybe bike lanes or proper lighting.

Of course, we are at the table when anyone calls. We're coming and we're going to help. But long term, making your neighborhood safer is thinking about how to prevent situations from happening in the first place.

SETTING THE ALARM CLOCK

Something that not everyone knows is that I am not a morning person. When I was working as an officer or even in grad school later, I preferred working afternoons or nights. As Sheriff, it's been an adjustment. I have early morning meetings and then there are late night community events which means longer days in general. Often, I'm pulled in three different directions. It really is a 24/7 job. I never have enough time in any given day.

ICE AND DHS IN WASHTENAW

CW: Under your leadership, the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office was one of the first law enforcement agencies in the country to officially resist ICE. How did you decide on this position so early in the game?

AD: I spent two years on the campaign trail telling the community I was going to end cooperation with immigration enforcement. The previous administration worked hard to only cooperate in specific situations, but still there was cooperation. It needed to stop. ICE is a bad influence on law enforcement. ICE tactics, the way the agents are trained, how they treat people, none of that is how we want Washtenaw deputies acting. So, when I started, we stopped all cooperation, including, cooperating on voluntary detainers in our jail.

A voluntary detainer is a request to local jails for ICE to take one of our detainees into custody after they are released. A voluntary detainer is a request. It is not a judicial warrant. The county has no obligation to comply, and arguably, it hurts people's due process rights. We are innocent until proven guilty in our Constitution and our courts. The Constitution doesn't say everyone "except people that are undocumented or those without visas." It says all people have rights.

As a result of ending cooperation with ICE, I was sent a letter accusing the department of obstructing their work. We did not obstruct. We declined, which we have the right to do. The letter was directed at me. They specifically said because of my taking office that the relationship changed with the Washtenaw Sheriff's Office.

The retaliation was to revoke the federal clearance of one of our detectives working with Homeland Security on child trafficking. Washtenaw County doesn't need federal help to continue aggressively investigating child trafficking. Still, it is revealing that they pulled back on child trafficking investigations because we were not voluntarily cooperating on detainers that hadn't been signed by a judge. The letter was turned over with FOIA and someone posted it on Reddit.

It is critical to maintain a separation between county enforcement and what is being attempted by a federal agency. We need our citizens to trust law enforcement. You never want a situation where people are afraid to

Crazy Wisdom sits down with Sheriff Alyshia Dyer to talk about her first year in office: ICE, Budgets, Karaoke, and learning to work together.

Bill Smith and Anna Gersh

see the law enforced. People in our immigrant community deserve police protection, to feel safe to call us when they're scared, when their houses are broken into, or when their children are being followed.

None of this is new. ICE has been taking families from their homes for years. But certainly, the situation is more alarming now. I've learned so much from Washtenaw grass roots organizers. I also commend our County Board of Commissioners, the Ann Arbor City Council, and most importantly Michigan Immigrant Rights Advocates (MIRA) who pushed for our local municipalities to follow what Chicago and other areas are doing while still staying within the law. I also want to thank the county commissioners who have been supportive, particularly Commissioners Yousef Rabhi, Katie Scott, and Andy LaBarre. They are working with our office to ensure that we do all we can to protect our community.

There is this fear about talking about immigration, like, "Don't talk about what you're doing. You will be targeted. You don't want to become Chicago or Minneapolis." My argument is that those cities have also fought back, and stuck to their values. I commend leadership there. I believe every community should be looking at how to keep values front and center in this climate.

I am learning every day. The national law enforcement progressive community is strong. We are actively communicating with counties and localities around the country. The progressive sheriff space may be small, but we are mighty and we stick together.

DATA-DRIVEN RESULTS

I have two data specialists. The first focuses on crime, the second on equity—racial disparities from a public health lens. The data is looking great. Homicides are going down. Officer uses of force is down and, as a result, resisting and obstructing officers has gone down. A lot of our front-end prevention work is working too. Community violence intervention work is helping. Our initial assumption was that a reduction in traffic stops would not lead to an increase in crime. Current data validates this. Fatal accidents are down. Non-fatal accidents have gone down. The data doesn't tell the whole story, but it does show that we're moving in the right direction.

TO BE YOUNG, FEMALE, AND MANAGING A $65 MILLION BUDGET

CW: At close to $65million, the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office budget is one of the largest in Michigan. In addition to county-wide law enforcement services, it covers corrections, parole monitoring and many community programs. Given your professional background as a deputy and a social worker, how did you prepare to manage this aspect of the work?

AD: A lot of people look at me and do a double take, like, "You're the sheriff? You're running the sheriff's office?" Yes, I am, and, alongside my team we're doing a really good job.

Our county has been around since 1823. There has never been a woman sheriff, let alone a sheriff under 40. I'm 35 now. The sheriff landscape is typically older, white, and male. Not a lot of women, not a lot of people of color, not a lot of younger people. There is a huge gap in representation.

One thing that needs to get out is the bias against women law enforcement leaders. I am responsible for the public safety of our entire county. I ovesee a budget of $65 million with around 420 employees. My job is harder because of the biases around my identity, but those same issues make me stronger.

While I was running for office, I had two years to prepare for my job as sheriff. I went back to school and got master's degrees both in Policy and in Social Work. During the transition I was able to consult with Jerry Clayton, our former Sheriff. And I spent my first year deeply studying the budget and assessing our processes.

There's a narrative going around that we're so over budget. It isn't true. That was really about the county commission not following through with funding the contracts for the food and medical they had signed. Jail food and medical were extremely underfunded. On top of that, my 2025 budget had been reduced by $2.5 million because of a new calculation for vacancy savings. Given those two things, I started my term with a projected 4.3-million-dollar deficit.

It is really expensive to run a jail. I used to be all about reducing the jail population because it was the right thing to do. I still believe that. I would much rather have people get services without being in jail. But now, I'm also like, "Don't put people in my jail if it isn't needed because we have to pay for it."

There are on average 300-350 people in jail at any time. Think about feeding 350 people three times a day. Then the food must meet calorie and nutrition standards. Then you have to consider allergies, health diets, and religious needs.

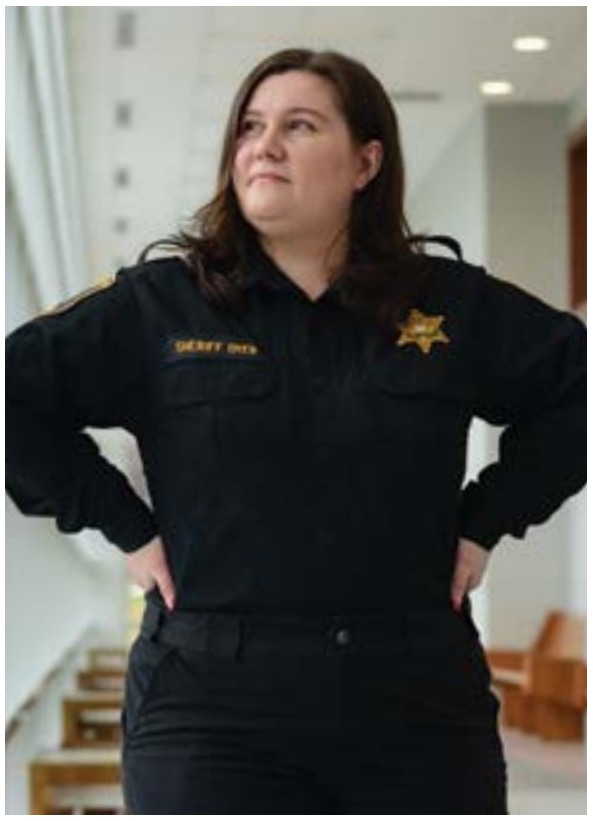
Trying to explain the importance of properly funding the jail at a time when the county was dealing with strained budgets was tough. Last year was tense, but in the end, we were able to remedy the shortfall.

CHOIR KID

I grew up as a choir kid. I'm not an amazing singer but I love music. I really love karaoke, karaoke always, always puts me in a good mood. I sing oldies like, "I Won't Dance," by Frank Sinatra; "Downtown," by Petula Clark; "Make Your Own Kind of Music," by the Carpenters. But, if I'm with friends I just sing what they're singing—uplifting, fun stuff.

I'm proud to say that after a tough year, the shortfall for food and medical costs has been remedied. Through really poring through the budget, I also found 2% savings which helped. In the end, our administration spent less than the previous sheriff's administration. I'm proud of that. We were able to reduce costs and identify containment measures. Now we are on track to balance the budget.

Fiscal responsibility is extremely important to me. I will continue working to remedy longstanding issues and finding ways to save our county money.



MAKING IT MORE HUMAN, IN-PERSON VISITS

CW: Washtenaw is one of the first municipalities in the country to have rolled out in-house jail visitation. Tell us why this was a priority for your office?

AD: As of this year, we have made in-person visits operational. That means children are now able to see and touch their parent. It's okay for people to hug each other or just hang out, talk, play games–to actually be with their loved ones.

In the 2000s there was a national move to phone and video visits. I think that was introduced in Washtenaw long before the pandemic. It was good that some restrictions were in effect during the pandemic. People could use the technology and still stay health protected. But that behind-glass move was made without fully understanding the human impact.

There are only a handful of other localities across the country that have moved to in-person visitation. The data shows that it reduces the use of force in the jail. It improves recidivism rates. Localities with in-person visitation have also seen a positive effect on staff. If you work as a corrections officer, you are naturally going to care about the other people in your environment.

There are obstacles to getting there. Through our first year, we've been assessing what works and what doesn't. We are accessing a national toolkit developed for corrections professionals and residents, the Law Enforcement Action Partnership, which has been helpful. We're not getting rid of phone and video. We're just adding the in-person component. We are working through our housing units now and building up a visitors list. We built a draft policy and created signage. We're working to make the visiting area look less like a jail. We're pulling together toys, books, and games for families to share. We still have to get furniture. It's still going to be a jail, but we can make it more human.

Word is out. People are talking, our staff, the residents and their families are getting the vision. People are excited. Things change when the residents can look forward to something. It creates a different culture.

KEEPING YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF THE SYSTEM

CW: You've spoken a lot about young people in the justice system and your own experiences with law enforcement as a young person. How does your administration hope to improve the relationship between young people and the justice system?

AD: I am passionate about helping young people stay out of the system. I grew up in Ypsilanti. My mom raised me and my brother. There were issues, I ran away a lot. That's how I had my first contact with the legal system.

I remember how I was treated by law enforcement. I had some good contacts and I had some pretty bad ones. I ran away for good when I was 17. A U-M professor let me stay with her family as a nanny. When I turned 18, she helped me get into Washtenaw Community College. I completed an associate's degree in criminal justice and then ended up going to the police academy.

While I was in the road patrol division at the sheriff's office, I worked closely with Washtenaw youth. I saw how young people were treated. I could see it even before they got into the system. You could see the path. They start getting in trouble at an early age for low level reasons. They don't get resources, they don't get help, they don't get decent school grades. They just get criminalized. And once that starts, they never got out of the system. There is no real path to the future.

Having a social work background helps me think differently about young people in need. One thing I'm really proud of this first year, is our roll out of "RAPID" (Restorative and Preventative Intervention and Diversion), a pre-arrest program to divert 12-to-25-year-olds involved in low-level offenses. RAPID bypasses the justice system by offering mental health and job readiness support. It is an alternative to arrest, it connects young people and their families with resources for growth and stability, rather than formal system involvement.

Now, instead of arrests, officers submit a case report to our RAPID partner, Corner Health Center. Corner Health builds a first-case management program based on what the young person identifies as their own need. When it is a young person, we really need to ask them, "What do you need to be successful?" This is a great example of the kind of trauma informed care I wish we had had when I was a road officer.

When I was policing, I was on a call about a young person skipping school. The parents called all the time asking the police to get their kid to school. They didn't know what else to do. I built a rapport with this young person, they told me, "I don't have clothes to wear. If I show up at school, I'm gonna get bullied." So, you get them some new clothes that they're proud of and suddenly, no more skipping school. It was as small, as simple as that. Getting young people the support and resources they need.

I know a lot of people in Washtenaw support this kind of mindset. Listening more, being trauma informed, and acting creatively about keeping young people out of the system. If we can do that effectively, we're making a safer community.

A CALLING

It really does feel like a calling. I'm a nerd. I actually want to read the technical stuff, even compliance reports. Believe it or not, the content is interesting: contracts, and data, and reports. Like, I really wanted to read the Justice Department recommendations on the Ferguson Report. I love this stuff, it's my passion. It comes naturally. It feels like this is where I am supposed to be.

MISSION COMPASSION AND THE WSCO TEAM

CW: The Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office employs approximately 425 people, including 120 sworn officers, across six divisions. Many of these employees worked for your predecessor. How are they responding to your new mission?

AD: We have so many good people that work here. I have a great team. My leadership style is collaborative, so my gaps are filled with the expertise of my team. They have been critical to the new mission's success.

It is common practice for a new sheriff to replace the leadership team. I didn't think that was the right move. Some of our best people were appointed by Jerry Clayton. Their institutional knowledge is a huge asset to our community. I chose to keep them in place to ensure we don't miss a beat. My commander Kurt Schiappacasse has been here for 25 years-plus. He is one of the best jail commanders in the country. I would say the same about Renee Casey, our community corrections director. Matt Harshberger, our undersheriff, was formerly chief in both the Ypsilanti and Pittsfield Township police departments. My Director of Operations, Crystal Campbell, is brilliant and has worked in local as well as county government. Both the people from the previous administration and our new appointments have been doing a phenomenal job. One of the best things I have done is to build a great team.

I've learned a lot this year. I am continuously soaking up information and I'm paying attention. Seeing how much our employees really go above and beyond has been a big inspiration to me. Working in a jail is very different than working on the road or in a police office. Sometimes people that are great officers, can't work in a jail, and vice versa. It's got to be someone that can handle the jail environment, that means someone who

From left: Crystal Campbell, Director of Operations; Alyshia Dyer, Sheriff; Kurt Schiappacasse, Commander of Corrections; Eugene Rush, Commander of Community Engagement

is compassionate, someone that represents our mission and values—someone that really cares about the population in the jail.

I have enormous respect for my WCSO employees as so many of them made what we have accomplished doable. Our Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) was critical during the transition and helped me get messages out to staff. Many frontline workers in our unions across county government also had my back, and the people that had worked in the former sheriff's administration really looked out for me. That all mattered especially as there had not been a sheriff transition for 16 years before I took office.

Staffing was a huge issue when I came in. Our corrections team was just so understaffed. We made that a priority. We're getting more people hired so now we don't have staff working 16-hour, back-to-back shifts.

I thought there would be more pushback to our new mission. There was a rumor that there would be a mass exodus because I was too progressive, like "the crazy liberal sheriff." We're seeing the opposite. And we've had a ton of people applying to work here. People are saying, "I never thought about being a corrections officer until I heard about the work you're doing." Or, "I applied because of the new mission." I feel so grateful when I hear that.

COMING UP NEXT?

Before the pandemic I used to do improv. I haven't done comedy yet.

WORKING TOGETHER, COUNTY COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

CW: Your first year put you in the line of fire with some county officials. Do you see that as an obstacle moving forward?

AD: When I was running for sheriff, people saw me as controversial. I went up against the political establishment of Washtenaw County: entrenched wealth and power. We built a huge grassroots coalition of folks across the county, across divides, and we won.

But I've learned that it's different running for office than being in office.

The politics of Washtenaw County have been the most surprising part of my first year. I thought winning was the hard part. I love the operations and the community work and I thought, "Now I get to focus on that." But the politics don't stop after the election. It's not just the legal system that needs reform, it's the politics too. There are people that are not happy that I'm in this seat. I don't know if I'll ever win them all over despite my best efforts. Luckily, they are not the majority.

The reality is the people elected me to be their sheriff, and this job is not easy. Everyday there are urgent matters to address. The work never stops, some change happens quickly, some things take longer and aren't as easy. The last thing I want to worry about is our county government throwing a wrench in what we are fighting to accomplish. Pair that with starting a first term under Trump 2.0. This work is the most rewarding thing I've ever done, but I would be lying if I said if some days weren't hard.

I'll be honest the transition was a challenge. I was naïve. I assumed that after the election people would be supportive. During the transition my mindset was collaboration, working with the county. We always want to do that. I am responsible for the public safety of our county.

But there were people who resented my win. I had to advocate and fight to bring my team in and make sure that the sheriff's office people who stayed on to work for me were not harmed. I'll give credit to our county administrator Greg Dill and Commissioner Rahbi who were focused on being helpful and on a smooth transition to the extent they could. There was a lot going on that we kept behind the scenes. Ultimately, we made it work but the first year was definitely not a walk in the park. The misinformation and rumors didn't help either.

It is strangely liberating that my troubles with the county commissioners came out during the public board meetings. My hope is that this year things will calm down. My success is all our success. I'm feeling more positive--commissioners have started to be more supportive. Thankfully, the budget issues I started with were largely remedied.

I would like to work collaboratively moving forward, it's what I've always wanted. Building relationships and seeing through differences to find ways to compromise is key. My biggest learning curve has been realizing I have to maintain a focus on the politics. The relationships are so critical. Now as sheriff, I say that I'm managing three tempos: the community; the operational; and the political.

My election as the sheriff is a testament to politics moving in a different direction. For a long time the same people controlled the Washtenaw political landscape. But now, the community is shaping election outcomes like never before. Our community is engaged and ready for change. That passion is a blessing. We will need broad community support for the work we are doing and will continue to do. At the end of the day, the community is what drives true change. If we can be innovative to reduce harm in Washtenaw, it will prove that people can do it in other places too. And that can improve public safety and people's lives.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

a free guide to local classes, workshops, and events

May through August 2026

Calendar edited by Kaili Brooks

A Course in Miracles

"A Course in Miracles" Study Group with Rev. David Bell & Randall Counts • Ongoing Mondays from 6:45 to 8:00 p.m. OR Thursdays from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. • Practical application of course principles to daily life. Additional, supporting works are also presented and discussed. Text and study materials are included. FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Art and Craft

"Interfaith Creative Expressions" Craft Group with Marice Clark • Ongoing Fridays • 1 to 4:30 p.m. • Come and go as you wish. Bring a project to work on or to start. Some weeks may involve a participant teaching a particular skill, such as beading, tie dying, or creating steppingstones out of concrete. We assist and support one another while exploring new possibilities. All levels of skill and ability are welcomed to attend. FREE, donations welcome. For more information contact Contact Marice at (248) 760-3878 or email studiosaluki@yahoo.com.

Sip, Listen, Design: A Tea Ritual with Oracle Card Making & Sound with Mary Ledvina • Friday, May 1 • 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. • Drink tea with me and make an oracle deck that requires no art experience, just writing and stamps. Come together in a simple tea ritual and experience live music while creating. All art supplies and tea provided. Doors closed at 6:45 pm. Sliding scale $40-$60. For more information contact Mary at (734) 646-9161, email maryledvina@gmail.com, or visit maryledvina.com.

Earth Sculpting & Plaster with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, May 9 • 1 to 5:30 p.m. • Learn how to identify, source, mix, andsculpt earth plaster (clay/sand subsoil) creating a sculpture. Try your hand at applying earth plaster. Use this natural, local medium for art or natural building projects: cob walls, earth ovens, benches, plasters on regular or straw bale walls, and more! Consider registering for the morning two hour learning tour beforehand. $35-50. For more information Contact Deanne at (248) 496 4088, email ecoartdb@gmail.com, or visit strawbalestudio.org.

Guardians of the Threshold with Eric Rentschler • Monday, June 1 through Tuesday, June 30 • Guardians of the Threshold is an exhibition of dimensional carved wall works exploring mythic imagery as psychological and spiritual architecture. Drawing from Egyptian and Norse symbolism, the collection presents figures and animal guardians not as historical artifacts, but as living archetypes. Gallery open Wednesday through Sunday. FREE. For more information contact Eric at Ecrentschler@gmail.com.

Westside Art Hop with Sophie Grillet • Saturday, June 13, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. & Sunday, June 14 from Noon to 5:00 p.m. • Ann Arbor's quirkiest art fair is back for another year! Come for a stroll in the historic Old West Side and see this year's gathering of local artists with their wares on display. The event takes place rain or shine and parking is easy to find. FREE. For more information contact Hannah at (616) 821-8825, email westsidearthop@gmail.com, or visit westsidearthop.com.

Weave a Willow Baby Bassinet with Michael Marie Schofield • Saturday, August 1 & Sunday, August 2 • 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Are you or somebody in your life expecting a new baby? Weave an heirloom wicker bassinet that is sure to be passed down for generations. In this 2-day class, we'll weave with willow using stake and strand basketry techniques. Each participant is welcome to bring up to one helper to assist with weaving, if desired. $325. For more information contact the Hickory Nut Farmstead at (734) 358-1142, email hickorynutfarmstead@gmail.com, or visit hickorynutfarmstead.com.

Candle-making & Crafts at Michigan Folk School with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, August 22 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Enjoy the process of dipping bees wax tapered candles and crafting with nature. This is a nurturing candle class and also includes sculpting earthen candle stick holders and decorating match boxes. $115; includes all materials. For more information visit mifolkschool.com or strawbalestudio.org.

Weave a Frame Basket Using Wild Materials with Michael Marie Schofield • Saturday, August 29 • 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Learn to weave with wild materials! At the end of the class, you'll take home your very own foraging basket made with wild materials. We'll discuss how to forage, harvest, and process a wide variety of plants for basketry. You'll then proceed to weave a traditional egg basket with willow and vines. $80. For more information contact the Hickory Nut Farmstead at (734) 358-1142, email hickorynutfarmstead@gmail.com, or visit hickorynutfarmstead.com.

Animals and Pets

Basic Telepathic Animal Communication with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, July 25 & Sunday, July 26 • 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Learn to communicate telepathically with animals, the way they communicate to each other. Open your natural intuitive senses in a fun, supportive training. Class is taught via Zoom. $180 per person/$90 for repeat students. For more information contact Judy at info@judyramsey.net.

Bodywork and Bodymind Therapies

Restorative Yoga with Reflexology Workshop: Overwhelm & Burnout with Crysterra Wellness • Friday, May 8 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Reflexology is an ancient healing modality that deals with the principle that nerve endings in the feet and hands correspond to all glands, organs, regions, and systems of the body. Enjoy this gentle, calming yoga practice paired with the healing and regenerative benefits of reflexology. Suitable for all fitness and experience levels. $30/$35. For more information contact Andrea at (734) 649-1849, email andrea@crysterrawellness.com, or visit crysterrawellness.com.

Mindful Yoga w/Meditation Workshop Theme: Chakra Balance with Crysterra Wellness • Friday, June 12 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Experience a calm nervous system, improved ability to cope with stress, better focus and overall sense of ease and well-being with this mindful yoga practice paired with meditation. In this gentle workshop, we will combine movement, breath work, mindfulness and meditation to cultivate the many benefits associated with a mindful meditation practice. $30/$35. For more information contact Andrea at (734) 649-1849, email andrea@crysterrawellness.com, or visit crysterrawellness.com.

Relevant Science for the Art of Somatics with Eileen Dickinson • Friday, July 24, Saturday, July 25, & Sunday, July 26 • 9 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. • In this three-day class we explore the science of presence, touch, and movement through didactic information, movement, and hands on activities both on and off the bodywork table. Applicable to a wide range of somatic practices, you will leave with more ease and effectiveness, and an understanding of how your work is grounded in science. $600. For more information contact Eileen at (734) 717-4145.

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raymondjames.com

Emily Rice
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Emily.Rice@
raymondjames.com

Kierra Ryan
Branch Associate
Kierra.Ryan@
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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Book Discussion Groups

Spiritual Book Study Online via Zoom with Sunny Johnson-Lemieux • Ongoing Wednesdays • 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. • Join our weekly online book study, currently reading The *Second Coming of Christ* by Paramahansa Yogananda. Each session includes a brief meditation, prayer, shared reading, and uplifting discussion. All are welcome at any point. The format encourages positive, focused sharing and a supportive space for spiritual growth. FREE. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore's Masters and Teachers Discussion Group with Jenna Hoyer • Friday, May 15, June 19, & July 17 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Looking for inspiration? We will read aloud selected writings from spiritual masters for an evening of spoken word and spiritual reflection and celebrate the literary legacies of those who have illuminated our path. Each evening is designed to foster a sense of community, reflection, and creative expression in a serene atmosphere. FREE. For more information contact events@crazywisdombookstore.com.

Breathwork

Guided Group Breathwork with Jackie Miller • Sunday, May 10 & 24, June 14 & 28, July 12 & 26, August 9 & 23 • 6 to 7:30 p.m. • A group session of gentle, energizing breathing with music, guided by Jackie Miller, certified breathwork facilitator. Experience the power of breath energy and non-ordinary states. Second Sundays in Ann Arbor, 4th Sundays in Ypsilanti. FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit thisbreath.com.

Energy Codes Breathwork Class with Phoenix Duffy • Thursday, May 14 • 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. • Come, learn how to breathe through four main anchor points in your body for grounding and direct your breath consciousness to clear the stuck stories, negative emotions, and even pain in your body. $10. For more information contact Phoenix at (734) 765-5830.

Buddhism

Jewel Heart Sunday Talks: Ancient Wisdom, Modern Times, with Demo Rinpoche • Ongoing Sundays • 11:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. • Join Demo Rinpoche for weekly Sunday morning public talks on a variety of topics that are suitable for newcomers and long-timers alike, followed by a facilitated group discussion based on the morning talk. FREE; donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

Sunday Services with Temple Priests & Dharma Teachers • Ongoing Sundays • 10:00 a.m. to Noon • Morning meditation service consists of two periods of meditation followed by chanting and a Dharma talk. FREE; donations welcome. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

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Dharma in the City: Vesak Day Talk with Demo Rinpoche • Friday, May 1 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • In Tibetan Buddhism, Vesak Day honors the birth, enlightenment, and death of Shakyamuni Buddha. On this special day, Demo Rinpoche gives a public talk covering the action known as "turning the wheel of dharma," which was the Buddha's first teaching known as the Four Noble Truths. FREE; registration required. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

Spring Seminar: H.H. Dalai Lama's Kindness, Clarity, and Insight with Demo Rinpoche • Saturday, May 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. & Sunday, May 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • His Holiness the Dalai Lama lays out the fundamental principles of Tibetan Buddhism in his classic book, "Kindness, Clarity, and Insight." During this seminar, Demo Rinpoche will give a commentary on this beloved book, focusing on the chapters that cover the Four Noble Truths and the Luminous Mind. Streamed live from New York. $180 Jewel Heart and/or Tibet House member / $220 Jewel Heart non-member. Pay what you can - No one is turned away. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org

Ceremonies, Celebrations, and Rituals

Buddha's Birthday with Temple Priests and Dharma Teachers • Sunday, May 24 • 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. AND 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Buddha's Birthday Celebratory Service. Special chanting, bathing of the baby buddha statue, children's service, parade, potluck, and birthday cake. Bring a dish to pass. Lighting of beautiful flower lanterns (evening session) ends the Buddha's Birthday observance in a serene way. The service includes readings from scriptures and the dedication of lotus lanterns. FREE, donations accepted. For more information contact the Zen Buddhist Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Planted In Sound: Half-Day Retreat with Julie Barron, Julie Kouyate, & Mady Kouyate • Saturday June 13 • 3 to 7:00 p.m. • This is an immersive sound experience with the aided connection of gentle plant/fungi allies like Kanna, Kava, and others. Set in a beautiful temple setting, participants will enjoy guided imagery with music and stories, elemental sound immersion, movement, and at the end gather around a fire with snacks. $250; sliding scale and scholarships are available. For more information contact Julie at the2jewels@gmail.com or email bluesagehealth.com.

Liberation of Life Ceremony with Temple Priests and Dharma Teachers • Sunday, June 14 • 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. • In the spirit of not to harm but to cherish all life, Liberation of Life Ceremony with activities in our large garden followed by a potluck picnic. Bring a dish to pass. The Temple will provide vegetarian hot dogs. FREE, donations accepted. For more information contact the Zen Buddhist Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Summer Solstice Ritual Celebration with Esther Kennedy • Sunday, June 21 • 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. • In summer we are acutely aware of belonging to a world that is vibrantly alive – wondrous in its diversity, beauty, and intensity. Come in Gratitude; bring a friend and maybe a treat to share. FREE. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000 or visit webercenter.org.

The Healing Feast: Dancing with the Divine Masculine with Sari Brown, Kiyoshi, & Forrest Hejkal • Sunday, June 21 • 5 to 8:00 p.m. • The Healing Feast offers food and community for healing connections with self, others, the earth, and the sacred. We share nurturing, globally-inspired food and practices to embody joy, healing, creativity, and abundance. This month focuses on the divine masculine. $0-$66 sliding scale. For more information contact Sari at (734) 660-2799, email thehealingfeastofconnection@gmail.com, or visit saribrownmusic.com.

The Healing Feast at the Gardens on Maplewood with Sari Brown • Friday, August 14 • 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. • The Healing Feast offers food and community for healing connections with self, others, the earth, and the sacred. We share nurturing, globally-inspired food and practices to embody joy, healing, creativity, and abundance. This month's outdoor feast will be held at the Gardens on Maplewood in Ypsilanti. $0-$66 sliding scale. For more information contact Sari at (734) 660-2799, email thehealingfeastofconnection@gmail.com, or visit saribrownmusic.com.

Chanting

Sufi Gathering with Imam Kamau Ayubbi • Tuesday, May 26, June 30, July 28, & August 25 • 7 to 8:00 p.m. • An evening of discussion and Sufi chanting held on Zoom. $5-$10 suggested donation. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Children and Young Adults

Family Services with Dharma Teachers and Temple Priests • Sunday, May 24 & June 14 • 9:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. • Our monthly Family Services will be held on celebration days during the summer. Buddha's Birthday on May 24th and Liberation of Life Ceremony on June 14th. July and August we will pause our Family Services so to focus on Peace Camp. FREE, donations appreciated. For more information contact the Zen Buddhist Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Crystals

Woo Woo Crystal Crawl with Mary Abraham • Saturday, May 2 • 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. • Crazy Wisdom Bookstore will be one of the stops for the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Woo Woo Crystal Crawl. Participants will receive a free bag of goodies. $79. Visit thewoowoo.com for more information.

Death and Dying

End-of-life Doula Training with Merilynne Rush • Tuesday, April 28, May 5, 12, 19, & 26, June 2 • 4 to 7:30 p.m. • Learn from an experienced doula and hospice nurse and a diverse team of facilitators. 100-page study guide includes resources on how to set up a business. No prior experience necessary. We emphasize practical aspects of caregiving, addressing the whole person and their "family," and culturally and LGBTQ-sensitive care. $725; scholarships and payment schedule available. For more information contact Merilynne at (734) 395-9660, email thedyingyear@gmail.com, or visit thedyingyear.org.

Death Café with Rev. Annie Kopko • Tuesday, May 5, June 2, & July 7 • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • A group-directed discussion of death, with no agenda, objectives, or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief-support or a counseling session. FREE. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Ann Arbor Virtual Death Café with Rachel Briggs • Saturday, May 2, June 6, July 4, & August 1 • 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. • Conversation on Zoom about all things related to death and dying. Participants join in small and large group discussion with deep listening and sharing from the heart. No agenda, no presentation. Open to all adults. Please note: This is not a grief support group. For more information contact Merilynne at (734) 395-9660, email thedyingyear@gmail.com, or visit thedyingyear.org.

Ann Arbor Death Café with Merilynne Rush at Crazy Wisdom • Saturday, May 16, June 20, July 18, & August 15 • 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Conversation about all things related to death and dying. Small & large group discussion, deep listening and sharing from the heart. No agenda, no presentation. Coffee, tea, snack available. Open to all adults. Accessible, confidential. Please note: This is not a grief support group. FREE. For more information contact Merilynne at (734) 395-9660, email thedyingyear@gmail.com, or visit thedyingyear.org.

Dye Your Own Botanical Burial Shroud with Michael Marie Schofield • Saturday, June 27 • 10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. • A shroud is a natural fabric covering used in natural burial or cremation. Shrouds represent one of the oldest, simplest, and most accessible forms of caring for our dead. In this workshop, we will dye a shroud using locally gathered plants. Each participant is welcomed to bring up to two helpers to assist, if desired. We'll also practice different ways to wrap a shroud (on dolls and a life-sized model) and will discuss the practical aspects of how shrouds can be used in home funerals, burial (conventional or green), and cremation. Held at the Hickory Nut Farmstead, 5310 Hickory Nut Lane, Dexter, MI 48130. For more information contact the Farmstead at (734) 358-1142, email hickorynutfarmstead@gmail.com, or visit hickorynutfarmstead.com.

Drumming

15th Annual Drum and Dance Jam with Curtis Glatter • Saturday, April 4, May 2, June 6, & August1 • 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. • All are invited to the 2026 season. Drumming improves musicality, hand/eye coordination, and cognition; relieves stress, and enhances spiritual joy in all ages! No experience is necessary. Bring a drum, or use one provided by the event. Suggested $5.00 donation. For more information, visit interfaithspirit.org.

Energy and Healing

Qigong: Wild Goose Form with Master Wasentha Young • Ongoing Tuesdays from 6 to 7:00 p.m. AND/OR Thursdays from 10 to 11:00 a.m. • The Wild Goose Form is a series of ongoing movements with a multidimensional perspective of Chi. It brings together imagery, yogic like stretches, and the

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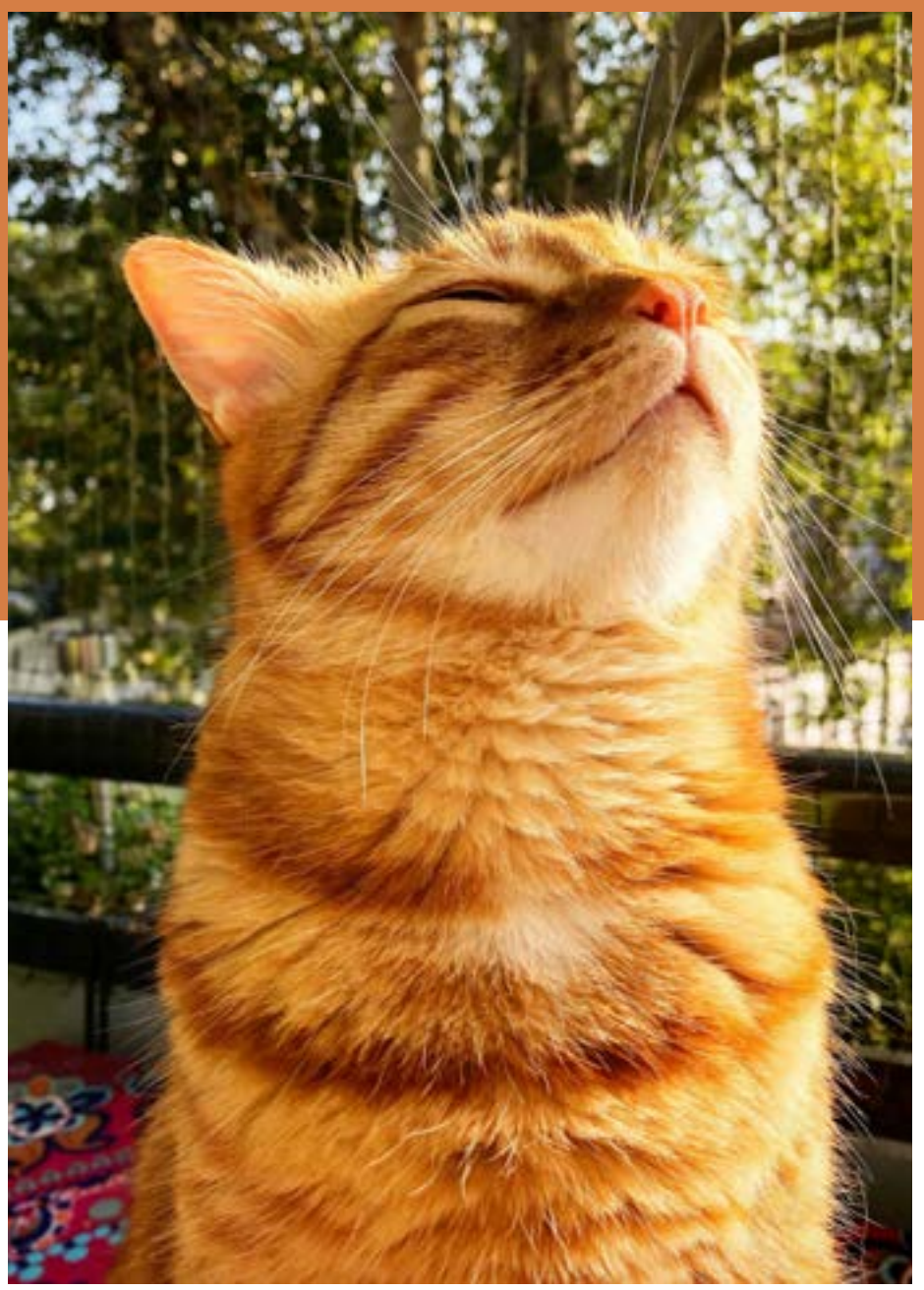

By Peggy River-Singer

Recently I went to the PTO Thrift Shop on South Industrial in Ann Arbor, and parked way in the back next to the railroad tracks. Returning to my car, I spotted a feral, long-haired orange cat perched on a piece of discarded concrete. We were only eight feet apart, but there was so much brush and junk between us that she felt safe enough to stay where she was.

There were bare patches on her skin, and I wondered about her health. So, I leaned on my car and offered Reiki. She accepted, and soon we began to chat.

Ginger Pie: I was surprised when you spoke to me so gently and respectfully. When I felt this strange energy, I considered escaping; but the energy itself reassured me, so I stayed. I feel its flow combined with your compassionate affection, so calming and offering acceptance and healing to my body and mind.

Peggy: I'm glad it feels good to you. Have you ever lived with humans?

Ginger: No.

Peggy: Has anyone ever caught you and given you medical treatment to prevent kittens, then set you free again?

Ginger: Yes.

Peggy: People do this to try and help animals. How do you and other ferals feel about it?

Ginger: [fiery] We RESENT being trapped and handled AGAINST OUR WILL by strangers, no matter what their intentions might be!! [Deep breath.] However, I am honored as a Wise One of my people; and from what I've seen in my many life experiences – and in the countless other timelines I have access to – I do acknowledge the benefits of these programs. Many cats say they're glad to be feeling better, and to be free of the instinctive compulsions to procreate.

Peggy: I can appreciate that! Do you mind if I ask how many kittens you've had in this lifetime?

She smiles.

Ginger: Technically there is no "this lifetime" because I occupy an infinite number of lifetimes. Did I not tell you I am a Wise One? As for kittens, I've personally

A Conversation With "Ginger Pie," A Feral Cat

borne 526 kittens, who have created 4,563 more kittens. I am far older than you think!

Peggy: Have you started sharing the Reiki energy with others yet?

Ginger: Yes, within seconds of receiving it; and some wonderful changes have been occurring. The energy seems to know exactly what each animal needs help with. Many of those who've accepted it are already sharing it with others; I know of one cat who asked the energy to help a very sweet-natured injured dog find the courage to approach humans for help. This is no small thing among us ferals!

Peggy: Are you sending Reiki into the past, then?

Ginger: Yes, and the future, the energy explained this was possible.

Peggy: Is there anything else you'd like to talk about today?

Ginger: [very serious] First, beware of your determination to "do things" that you think will benefit others even though you haven't asked them first!

Second, for those who help with trap-and-release, try to keep your energy soft and encouraging. And, visualize that we will be freed again.

Third, remember that most of us are feral by choice. We have important work to do! Just one example is calibrating the planet's magnetic lines while pressing our bodies against the soil. Yes, housecats also do this; but ferals can accomplish more without the distractions of being human companions.

I have been sharing this entire conversation with millions of other cats, and I hear gratitude and appreciation from most. I thank you for this opportunity.

Peggy River-singer is an all-beings communicator, Pleiadian Starseed, and lifelong writer. She dwells in a funky little apartment on the enchanted shores of Ford Lake in Ypsilanti, where she teaches fae folk how to use and share Reiki to help bring more joy and healing into the world. More of her articles are posted on angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com. To request a communication session, please call 734-548-0194.

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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

acu-point system. Students learn to cultivate and receive the energy of the universe, nature, and earth. You can attend one or both sessions per week (down a flight of stairs, no elevator). $225 class package available. For more information contact the Peaceful Dragon School at (734) 741-0695, email info@peacefuldragonschool.com, or visit peacefuldragonschool.com.

Women's Health Energy Healing Two-Day Seminar with Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation • Saturday, May 16 from 2 to 4:00 p.m. & Sunday, May 17 from 1 to 5:00 p.m. • This energy healing two-day event is for women of all ages interested in exploring prana vidya and prana nidra—two traditional yoga modalities for healing self and others. No previous experience is needed. For best results please attend both days. $199/$179 early registration. For more information contact Ema at EmaStefanova@cs.com. or visit yogaandmeditation.com.

Film

Free Film & Discussion with Jewel Heart instructors • Friday, May 8, June 12, July 10, & August 14 • 7 to 9:15 p.m. •

- **May:** *On Life and Enlightenment: Principles of Buddhism*, 2006. Explores Tibetan Buddhism in all its various manifestations.
- **June:** *Vajra Sky Over Tibet*, 2005. A cinematic pilgrimage to revered venues and festivals that survive in Tibet.
- **July: Wonder**, 2017. Based on the New York Times bestselling book, this movie tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences.
- **August: White Bird**, 2023. In this sequel to the film *Wonder*, Julian Albans, expelled from school for mistreating a disabled boy, is visited by his grandmother.

FREE; concessions available. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

Herbal Medicine

Herbal Medicine Open House with Mary Light • Saturday, May 6, June 2, & August 1 • Noon to 1:00 p.m. • Join us for a tour of our herbal medicine center, school, and apothecary. Held at the Dexter Natural Health Center, 3255 Central St. Dexter MI, 48130 FREE. For more information contact Mary at (734) 769-7794 or visit naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

Holistic Health

Thrive Wellness Center Open House with Dr. Shannon Roznay & Practitioner Emily Golab • Thursday, May 7 • 5 to 7:00 p.m. • Join us for an evening of connection and wellness. Enjoy appetizers, refreshments, giveaways, and event-only promotions. Meet our team, explore natural health solutions, and connect with local vendors. FREE. For more information contact Thrive Wellness Center at (734) 470-6766.

July One Week Session with Steiner Health • Monday, July 13 through Friday, July 17 • 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • The Steiner Health July One Week Session is a day program based on our Two-Week Life Force Intensive Health Retreat. Patients will receive medical care and a variety of anthroposophical therapies, including: art, movement, massage, color light ,and nursing therapies. One organic vegetarian meal is served midday. $1,800. For more information contact Steiner Health at (734)222-1491, email orders@steinerhealth.org, or visit steinerhealth.org.

Intuitive and Psychic Development

Focused Mind Meditation: Teleconference with John Friedlander • Sunday, May 3, June 7, July 5, & August 2 • 9:00 a.m. to Noon • Development of sustained focused meditation makes it easy to develop a whole new magnitude of psychic ability, as well as a whole new level of clarity and spiritual openness. See website for payment information. $15. For more information contact Violeta at (734) 476-1513 or visit psychicpsychology.org.

Psychic Psychology Women's Group: Teleconference with Gloria Hemsher & John Friedlander • Tuesday, May 5, June 2, July 7, & August 4 • 7 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. • For women only. Meditations concentrating on women's issues relative to biological energies as well as that of the aura. Some prerequisites. Please contact teachers. $10. For more information contact Violeta at (734) 476-1513 or visit psychicpsychology.org.

How To Use A Pendulum To Change Your Life with Phoenix Duffy • Sunday, May 17 • 2 to 4:00 p.m. • An interactive workshop where we will explore how to align, calibrate, and utilize the Pendulum as a tool to connect with our guides to receive guidance, clarity, and healing for our body, soul and life. Please bring a Pendulum or purchase one at the store before class. $25 before May 17, $30 cash at door. For more information contact Phoenix at Phoenix@threebutterflies.org or visit ThreeButterflies.org.

Summer Intensive 2026: Webinar/Teleconference with John Friedlander • Thursday, July 16 & Friday, July 17 from 7 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday, July 18 & Sunday, July 19 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon & 2 to 4:00 p.m. • New material introduced with continued development of advanced and core techniques seeking a natural sense of skill in everyday life. Prerequisite: Level 1 Psychic Development class, CD or permission of instructor. $275. For more information contact Gilbert at gchoud@yahoo.com or visit psychicpsychology.org.

9th Annual Comprehensive Women's Group Review 2026 Teleconference with Gloria Hemsher • Thursday, August 20 & Friday, August 21 from 7 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday, August 22 & Sunday, August 23 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon & 2 to 4:00 p.m. • For Women Only: Review of monthly Women's Group meditations presented during the last year since August 2025. $275. For more information visit visit psychicpsychology.org.

Massage

Irene's Free Open House with Irene's Myomassology Institute • Friday, August 14 • 3 to 7:00 p.m. • Get a feel for Irene's campus at our Massage School Open House! Enjoy free classes, complimentary massage, raffles, prizes, and more. Come explore our campus, meet staff, learn about Irene's program, and find out just what makes us the best choice for massage education. Bring a friend and save your spot now! FREE. For more information contact the Institute at (248) 350-1400, email contact@irenes.edu, or visit irenes.edu.

Meditation

Healing & Compassion Meditations with Hartmut Sagolla • Ongoing Mondays • Noon to 1:00 p.m. • Hartmut Sagolla leads a 30 to40 minute guided meditation on a Buddhist theme followed by discussion. Meditations are centered around healing oneself and others and developing compassion. They include concentrated meditation, visualization, and contemplative meditations. Online only. FREE; donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

Evening Group Meditations with Song of the Morning Community • Ongoing Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays • 8 to 9:00 p.m. • Evening Meditations include guided prayer, chanting, and silent meditation, with simple instruction to help newcomers feel supported. Practices are offered in the spirit of Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings. FREE. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org

Mantra Kirtan with Ananda and Deva • Ongoing Thursdays • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • Traditional Hare Krishna chanting circle for healing and connection with vegetarian meal served after at 8 p.m. All welcome. FREE. For more information contact the Harmony Collective at deva@theharmonycollective.org.

Meditation on Serenity & Compassion with Khenpo Tshering Chophel • Ongoing Saturdays • 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. • Meditation on compassion starts with serenity then opens our hearts to genuine caring for all beings. Recognizing that everyone shares the wish to be happy and free from suffering, we practice broadening our focus beyond our own wellbeing. Ongoing; participants can attend whenever they wish; no prior meditation experience necessary. FREE, donations accepted. For more information contact Lama Nancy at (734) 649-2127, email lamanancy@karunabuddhistcenter.org, or visit karunabuddhistcenter.org.

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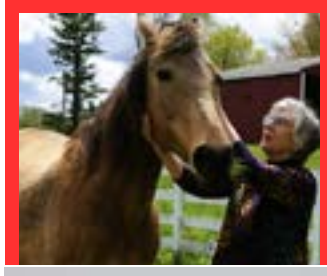

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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Three-Hour Meditations with Song of the Morning Community • Ongoing First Saturdays • 1 to 4:00 p.m. • Our three-hour meditations are an ongoing tradition led by members of our Clear Light Community. Each hour begins with chanting, prayer, and an inspirational reading, followed by silent meditation. You are welcome to come and go on the hour or stay for as many hours as you wish. FREE; donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

White Tara Guided Healing Meditation with Jewel Heart Instructors • Ongoing Sundays • 9:30 to 10:35 a.m. • Tara is the mother goddess of Tibetan Buddhism, known for her quick and compassionate activity. White Tara is particularly associated with healing and long life. These guided meditations use visualization techniques to overcome physical, mental and emotional suffering. FREE; donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

Mindfulness and Compassion for Connecting in a Fractured World Workshop with The Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness • Saturday, May 9 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Join this day of learning, reflection, and practice presented by Dr. Sydney Spears, Ph.D., LCSW and Dr. Tracy Ochester, Psy.D., nationally recognized leaders in mindfulness and compassion. This workshop will be a collaborative space to discover and experience contemplative practices during challenging times. Tiered Pricing - $175 to $225; CE's available. For more information contact AACFM at info@aacfm.org or visit aacfm.org.

Overnight Introductory Meditation Course with Dharma Teachers • Saturday & Sunday, May 22 & 23, June 12 & 13, July 17 & 18, & August 14 & 15 • This course covers the same content as our 5-Thursday evening class in a condensed format. It is ideal for out-of-towners, local people who cannot attend the Thursday evening course, or those who would like to attend a one-night Zen meditation instructional retreat. Cost includes overnight accommodation and a vegetarian breakfast. $200. $160 for students and unwaged. For more information contact the Zen Buddhist Temple, at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Introductory Zen Meditation Course with Dharma Teachers • Thursday, May 28, June 4, 11, 18, & 25 • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • The viewpoint of Zen is that life lived fully in each moment is the end and purpose in itself, and not the means for something else. Held in the Temple's meditation hall, the course includes simple stretching exercises, work with the breath, meditation postures, concentration, and mindfulness practice. $200. $160 for students and unwaged. For more information contact the Zen Buddhist Temple, at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Days of Mindfulness Meditation with Esther Kennedy • Saturday, June 6, July 18 & August 22 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. • Join our mindfulness community as we deepen our understanding of and commitment to daily meditation practice. Reflecting upon our relationships with honesty and courage, we amplify our capacity to be love within family, neighborhood, city, and world. $35; includes lunch. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000 or visit webercenter.org.

Daylong Meditation Retreat with Carol Blotter • Saturday, June 6 • 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Meditation practice of sitting and walking plus a short talk. Find peace and calm in the quiet wooded space of Michigan Friends Center in Chelsea. Appropriate for all levels of meditators. Suggested Donation $30-$60 or what you can afford. For more information contact the MFC at manager@mfcenter.org.

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Music, Sound, and Voice

Sacred Sound Journey: Vibrational Cacao Elixir with Kelly Borchert • Sunday, May 3, June 7, July 5, & August 2 • 3 to 4:30 p.m. • Experience the soothing resonance of crystal singing bowls, the deep and mysterious tones of gongs, and a unique collection of sacred sound instruments. Together, they create a powerful field of vibration that supports deep relaxation, inner peace, and vortex of self-healing. $45. For more information visit veraposeyoga.com.

Didgeridoo Sound Journey: Manifesting Your Heart's Desire with Harper & Midwest Kind • Friday, May 8 • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • Sound healers Peter D. Harper and Bobbi Llewellyn-Harper present a workshop which provides tools to manifest the heart's purified desire. Learn how to access creating imagination, turning the seed idea into the physical. The evening will end with a sound bath with the Didgeridoo, a powerful and uplifting meditational experience. $50. For more information visit veraposeyoga.com.

The Sonic Temple: Immersive Sound Journey & Sacred Wisdom with David Shiva Das • Friday, May 8 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • The Sonic Temple is a guided meditation experience blending live ambient music with readings from India's sacred texts. Participants are invited on an immersive sound journey designed to foster deep relaxation and spiritual connection. FREE. For more information visit davidshivadas.com.

Cafe 704 with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Saturday, May 9, June 13, July 11, & August 8 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • Live music in a smoke- and alcohol-free venue, in person or livestream on Zoom. Schedule is as follows: Julie Beutel and Friends (May), Mary and the HusBand (June), Laz Slomovitz and Friends (July), Kozora Quartet (August). $10 to $20 suggested donation. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Community Sing with Matt Watroba • Wednesday, May 13 & June 10 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • You don't need to be a good singer—whatever that means. You just need to love singing. $5 to $10 suggested donation. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org or mattwatroba.net

Singing for Comfort with Rev. Layla Ananda • Thursday, May 14, June 11, July 9, & August 13 • 7 to 8:15 p.m. • We sing short, easy-to-learn, comforting songs, many of which come from the Threshold Choir repertoire. You can sing along, lead a song for our friendly, welcoming group (usually around a dozen people), or simply listen. No experience is necessary. FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit interfaithspirit.com.

Pagan Spirituality

Witches' Night Out with Moira Finkel at Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, May 13, June 10, July 8, & Aug 12 • 6 to 8:00 p.m. • Crazy Wisdom Bookstore is hosting our monthly gatherings! Join like-minded individuals on the second Wednesday of each month to discuss upcoming events, share topics of interest, and answer questions. This is a judgment-free zone, open to everyone! Come to share, listen, learn, and enjoy! FREE. For more information contact Moira mopayne@umich.edu.

Goddesses of the Arbor at Crazy Wisdom • Third Wednesday each month (No meeting in June or July) • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • A monthly meet up for Maven/Late Millennial/GenX++ women. Everyone is welcome, but topics will center around these ages & stages. Join our Facebook group (@CrazyWisdomGoddessCircle) for details on each month's topics, activities & after discussion. Book suggestions Goddess study Cycles of life Seasonal crafting Manifest and Intention setting activities Political discussion Connection & more! For more information visit crazywisdombookstore.com.

Earth Church: Reimagining our World Midsummer Celebration with Rocky Rains & Lucinda Reinas • Saturday, June 7 • 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. • Midsummer is the perfect time to reconnect with the Earth Mother and the spirits of nature. We shall learn about the power of trees, connect with our plant, nature spirt, and animal allies and learn how to identify healing plants. Afterward we will have a potluck to strengthen the bonds of community. FREE. For more information contact Rocky at (734) 799-7502 or email rainsrocky4@gmail.com.

Summer Solstice Pagan Chant Sing-Along with Nora Farley • Thursday, June 18 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Celebrate the longest day of the year and the beginning of summer, with music from Earth-based, spiritual traditions. Bring you own instrument, or use one provided by the event. All ages, spiritualities, and musical abilities welcomed! FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

What's New in the Community

SPOTLIGHT!

By Lynda Gronlund

The Great Lakes Forager's Gathering began as a potluck with a dozen people in 2014 and has grown into the largest and longest running foraging event in the Great Lakes region.

People come from as far away as New York, South Carolina, and Iowa to spend a weekend camping, learning, sharing knowledge, gathering plants, crafting, and cooking at Frog Holler Organic Farm in Brooklyn, Michigan. Organizer Rachel Mifsud said the event grew "by accident," doubling in attendance each year for the first few years. It evolved into a full weekend of camping by year five, and in 2019 it moved to the large hayfield surrounded by woodlots and a stream at Frog Holler. The site had a stage, sound system, pavilion, and outdoor commercial kitchen already set up for a large annual music festival they host, so it was a perfect place for the Gathering to continue to grow.

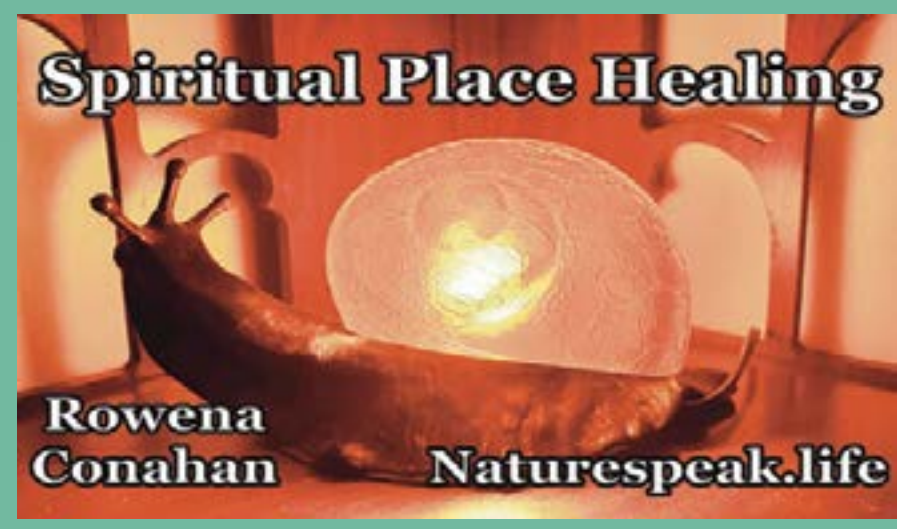
This year, the Gathering will run from June 18th through the 21st. The summer solstice weekend was chosen specifically, said Mifsud, for the longest daylight. She said that the event usually draws 250 to 300 people these days, and that as the local foraging community continues to grow, the event is able to offer more activities, topics, and fun. Around thirty people contribute to running the event, she explained. Community cooks prepare meals from wild foods gathered year-round in preparation for the weekend. On Sunday, the groups holds a pancake breakfast with pancakes made from acorn flour and wild blueberries. The acorns are processed on site so participants can learn how. This particular tradition started, said Mifsud, during the event's fifth year, which was held at a horse camp. "There was horse poop everywhere, and we cooked on an open fire on the ground. It started pouring rain, and the people who would become our kitchen crew stood out there and cooked pancakes for everybody."

There are no vendor fees at the Gathering, said Mifsud. Every attendee who is interested is free to set up a table to sell their foraging-related products. "We want people to show what they have and make some money," she said, because it strengthens the local and regional foraging community. Teachers and vendors for the event have included foragers, herbalists, hunters, trappers, naturalists, "wild foodies," and bushcrafters. Anything using natural products can be part of the gathering: flint knapping has been featured in the past, and this year participants can learn broom making and basket weaving with natural materials. In addition to mushroom and plant walks and wild food gathering and processing, there is a potluck, open mic entertainment, a scavenger hunt, multiple cooking contests, community games, stargazing with a telescope, and weekend-long projects people can participate in.

Mifsud said there will be around 30 instructors teaching on various topics, several breakout sessions, and child-friendly activities. Only instructors from the Great Lakes region are hired for the event, both to support the regional community and to ensure the information is relevant to people living here. New offerings this year include three optional, limited-enrollment field trips: an introductory fishing trip at a nearby private lake with instruction on catching, cleaning, and cooking the fish; a trip to a nearby restored habitat to learn from local ecologists about restoration ecology and the glacial geology of the area, along with a visit to an artesian well to gather water; and a trip to a nearby bog to learn bog plant identification from calf-deep in the water.

More information about the Great Lakes Foragers Gathering including online registration is available at willforageforfood.com/gathering. Rachel Mifsud can be reached via email at rhmifsud@gmail.com. The community is active on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/WillForageforFood.

Resources for Conscious Living



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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Peace

Peace Generator with Craig Harvey • Friday, May 15, June 19, & July 17 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • Join our silent circle, in person and on Zoom, as we meditate on and pray for healing, miracles, and peace within ourselves and across the globe. Drop in at any time during this event. FREE, donations welcome. For more information contact Craig at peacegenerator2001@gmail.com.

Personal Growth

Ann Arbor Zen Buddhist Temple Visitor's Program with Dharma Teachers and Temple Priests • Dates Flexible • Follow the daily schedule and participate in retreats, study groups, public service, and yoga classes as your schedule permits. Pursue your spiritual path, seeking peace and harmony in a wholesome environment. Advance arrangement with the Temple Director is necessary. Rates available upon inquiry. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Reiki

Holy Fire Reiki Master Class with Laura Ziemba • Friday, May 22 from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday, May 23 & Sunday, May 24 from 10 :00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. • Reiki 1 and 2 are prerequisites. We will be meditating, receiving the Master attunement, practicing attunements and hands on treatments. Location to be announced. $650. For more information contact Laura at (269) 646-1122 or email radiantlightbodylaura@gmail.com.

Usui System of Reiki Healing, First Degree with Suzy Wienckowski • Saturday, July 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. & Sunday, July 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Reiki is a hands-on healing practice that promotes balance of the body/mind/spirit allowing you to feel and function better. Reiki is an invaluable resource for self-care and for bringing healing touch to others. Class includes, Reiki history, spiritual precepts, treatment form for yourself and others, and individual initiations. $200. For more information contact Suzy at (734) 476-7958 or email suzyreiki@aol.com.

Retreats

SW Lake Michigan Yoga & Meditation Retreats with Ann Arbor Yoga & Meditation • Four Day Retreats: Thursday through Sunday, May 7through 10 OR 21, through 24; June 25 through 28; July 9 through 12 OR 16 through 19; August 6 through 9; Three- Day Retreats: Friday through Sunday, May 8, 9, & 10 OR 22, 23, & 24; June 26, 27, & 28; July 10, 11, & 12 OR 17, 18, & 19; August 7, 8, & 9 • Our small group retreats are for beginners and pros interested in experiencing yoga and meditation for healing, as a way of life, and personal growth. Come to deeply relax, learn user friendly therapeutic breathing, meaningful meditations to self care, and more. Enjoy beautiful indoor and outdoor spaces, Lake Michigan sunsets and more. Four-day retreats $749; 3-day $599. For more information contact Ema at EmaStefanova@cs.com. or visit yogaandmeditation.com.

Day of Mindfulness One-Day Retreat with Dharma Teachers • Saturday, May 9 • 9:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Sitting and walking meditation, simple manual work, a wholesome vegetarian meal, and rest – an interval of deepening, of slowing down, silence, and mindfulness. $50 members/$60 non-members. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Inner Peace Retreat with Song of the Morning Community • Friday, Saturday, & Sunday, May 15, 16, & 17 OR June 12, 13, & 14 • Retreat investment: $108. Lodging fees vary by accommodation and includes all meals. You'll select

Voices of this Region's Conscious Living Community Videocast Interviews on crazywisdomjournal.com

View complete interviews from Crazy Wisdom's Salon Series —
The Sages of Ann Arbor — as well as other interesting and informative interviews with community leaders.

Interviews newly posted are with Dr. Dennis Chernin, Lisa Gottlieb, Dr. Jay Sandweiss, and Demo Rinpoche.
These public "conversations" in the Crazy Wisdom Lounge are moderated by Bill Zirinsky,
longtime Editorial Director of the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal.*
Check back as new interviews will be posted periodically!

Demo Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist monk and incarnate lama, leads Jewel Heart, the Ann Arbor-based Tibetan Buddhist Center, recognized nationally and internationally as a center of Buddhist teaching. Demo Rinpoche has spent most of his life studying in monasteries in India with thousands of other monks, and under the Dalai Lama's direct supervision.

One of the wise men of integrative medicine in this region, Dr. Dennis Chernin (and Dr. Lev Linkner) founded the Parkway Center, the original and pre-eminent clinic for practitioners of complementary, holistic, and integrative medicine in Ann Arbor. Dr. Chernin now offers Homeopathic, Holistic and Preventive Medicine Consulting.

One of Ann Arbor's modern-era renaissance women, Lisa Gottlieb has been a leader in the community for decades. In recent years she's been deeply involved in Nonviolent Communication, as a certified trainer, and as the Founder and Director of Compassionate Communication of Ann Arbor.

Physician and skilled raconteur, Dr. Jay Sandweiss is one of the best-known and most respected integrative physicians in the region. Dr. Sandweiss is board certified by the American Osteopathic Association in neuro-musculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative medicine, and board certified in medical acupuncture by the American Board of Medical Acupuncture.

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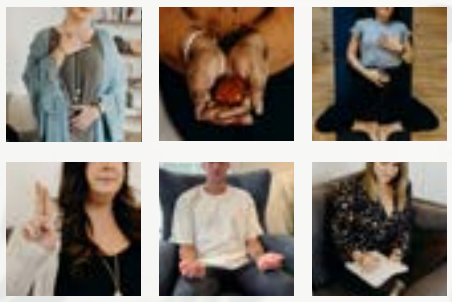

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and pay for lodging during registration. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Days of Reflection with Sharon Zayak • Thursday, May 28 through Friday, May 29 • These two days invite us into a contemplative experience of our intimate connection with the whole of life. In spite of all we hear and witness in these violent times, we are reminded that our incredibly beautiful Earthen home holds great promise and hope for us and for herself. Registration required; Cost: Commuter $80; Single $160; Double $130 each; If registering for Live Stream, use "Commuter" designation. This program will not be recorded. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000 or visit webercenter.org.

Nurturing a Nature-Connected practice: a Yoga & Meditation Retreat with Emily Adama & Ari Wakeman • Friday, June 12 through Sunday, June 14 • Yoga and meditation compliment one another on the spiritual path – embracing this time-honored duo, we will alternate between mindful movement and stillness, deepening our connection to our bodies and the present moment through 10+ hours of indoor and outdoor yoga and meditation. $465-$650. For more information visit earthwellretreat.com.

Summer Solstice Hatha Yoga Retreat with Golden Lotus Yoga Teachers Association • Friday, June 19 through Sunday, June 21 • Celebrate the International Day of Yoga and the Summer Solstice with Song of the Morning and GLYTA. This all-levels retreat features yoga and meditation classes, vegetarian meals, guided nature walks, free time, beautiful scenery, and the joyful fellowship that makes Song of the Morning retreats so special. Retreat investment: $150. Lodging fees vary by accommodation and include all meals. You'll select and pay for lodging during registration. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Colors of the Soul: A Rainbow Palette of Restoration, Creative Arts, Movement, and Meditation with Megan Sims & Emily Adama • Friday, June 19 through Sunday, June 21 • The solstice weekend is the perfect time to explore the beauty of life that often eludes us in our busy schedules and crazy world. This retreat experience will be equally restorative and peaceful, as it is fun, creative, and colorful! Inspired by creative movement (InterPlay, NIA, Yoga), we will rediscover the magic within ourselves and each other. 415-$650. For more information visit earthwellretreat.com.

Divine Healing Retreat with Drs. Will & Wendy Page-Echols • Friday, June 26 through Sunday, June 28 • Discover practical spiritual tools for daily life through gentle yoga, meditation, chanting, prayer, nature connection, journaling, breathwork, and stress release. Rooted in the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, this retreat supports balance, resilience, inner guidance, and joyful well-being. Retreat investment: $150. Lodging fees vary by accommodation and include all meals. You'll select and pay for lodging during registration. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Directed Retreat with Mary Sue Kennedy, Joan Ebbitt, Trudy McSorley, Esther Kennedy, Joan Delaplane, & Janice Brown • Monday, July 6 through Friday, July 10 • This is an individual quiet retreat with a daily meeting with a spiritual director. Commuter $240: includes lunch; Single $570: includes all meals; Double $470 each: includes all meals. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000 or visit webercenter.org.

Reflection on the Mystics with Judi Clemens & and Phillip D. Johnson • Sunday, July 26 through Wednesday, July 29 • This retreat will focus on Howard Thurman, American author, philosopher, minister, theologian, Christian mystic, educator, and civil rights leader as well as Brazilian Catholic Religious Sister and missionary Dorothy Stang. Registration required; Cost: Commuter: $180; Double: $280 each; Single: $380. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000 or visit webercenter.org.

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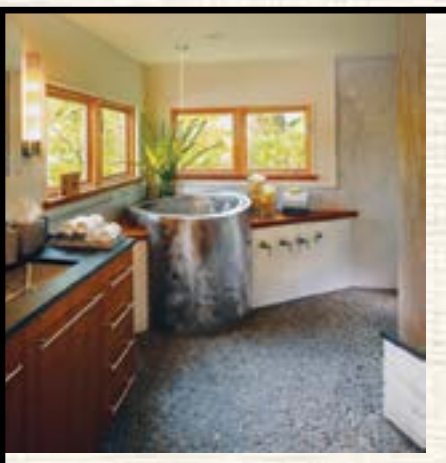

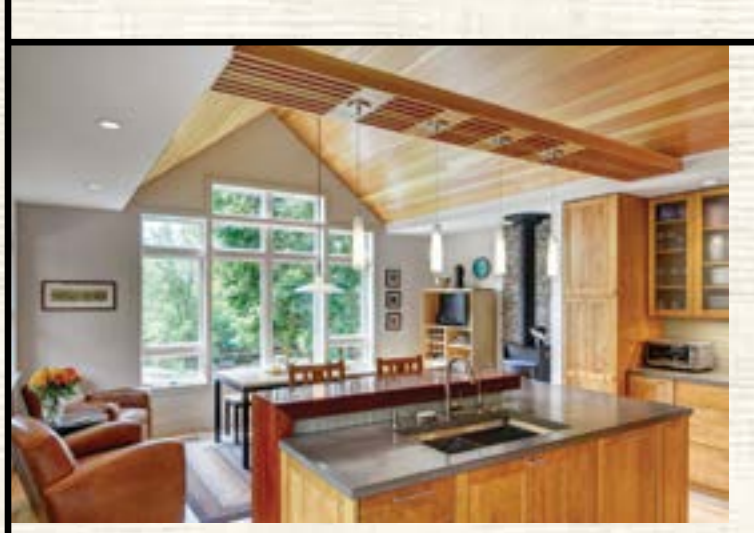

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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Zen Peace Camp with Temple Priests and Dharma Teachers • Saturday, August 1 through Thursday, August 6 • Tent camping in community with all ages, by the lake and in the forest, near Ann Arbor. Learn about peace and happiness from the Buddhist perspective of the interrelationship of all things. Activities emphasize mindfulness, cooperation, and appreciation for nature and play while seeking to balance structure and spontaneity. Volunteer opportunities available. Per-camper and family rates. Please inquire. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Self-Realization Fellowship Convocation Week with Song of the Morning Community • Sunday, August 2, through Sunday, August 9 • Immerse yourself in Paramahansa Yogananda's how-to-live teachings during this uplifting annual week at Song of the Morning, held in harmony with SRF Convocation. Enjoy classes, fellowship, personal meditation, and spiritual renewal in a peaceful woodland setting, while sharing the blessings of Convocation week in the company of God seeking souls. Participants welcome to attend part of the week. FREE; lodging fees vary by accommodation, include all meals, and are selected and paid during registration. Flexible attendance is welcome, and participants are invited to sign up for one volunteer service shift during the week. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Meditative Gardener Retreat with Will and Wendy Page-Echols • Friday, August 14 through Sunday, August 16 • Deepen your connection with nature through meditative gardening, chanting, meditation, and mindful cultivation. Explore Yogananda's teachings on plant consciousness while experiencing gardening as a spiritual practice rooted in peace, joy, and vibrant, awake living. Retreat investment: $108. Lodging fees vary by accommodation and include all meals. You'll select and pay for lodging during registration. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Exploring Mantra, Song, & Chant with Emily Adama • Friday, August 14 through Sunday, August 16 • This weekend explores mantra, song, and chant as tools to deepen our yoga and meditation practices. Drawing on yogic and contemplative traditions, participants will explore how vibration, repetition, and voice can calm the nervous system, focus the mind, and open the heart. No singing experience is required. $465-$650. For more information visit earthwellretreat.com.

Cultivating Connection: A Couples Retreat for Play, Presence & Pleasure with Tatianah Thunberg & Carisa Wilder • Friday, August 21 through Sunday, August 23 • Open to couples of all orientations, identities, ancestries, ages and stages who want to reconnect after a stressful season, deepen intimacy and trust, learn tools for co-regulation and authentic relating, explore touch, play, and presence while creating pathways of safety, and experience relational nourishment within a supportive community. $1050-$1475/per couple. For more information visit earthwellretreat.com.

Shamanism

Introduction to Journeying with Connie Lee Eiland • Sunday, May 3, July 26, & August 30 • 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Six-hour class includes power animal retrieval and journeys to upper, lower, and middle worlds. Journeying is with drums and rattles. Introduction to journeying is required for all advanced classes. It also allows you to get guidance directly from your helping spirits. I$100 f paid two weeks before, otherwise $125. For more information contact Connie at (248) 809-3230, email clshebear7@gmail.com, or visit shewolfshaman.com.

Mother Earth Shamanic Sound Journey with Cacao & Mary Ledvina • Saturday, May 9 • 2 to 4:00 p.m. • The day before Mother's Day, travel to the lower world to connect to Mother Earth with an option to connect to your female ancestors. Experience a sound bath as you receive the healing and/or guidance you need through a guided journey assisted by optional cacao. Doors close at 2:15 p.m. sliding scale: $40-$60. For more information contact Mary at (734) 646-9161, email maryledvina@gmail.com, or visit maryledvina.com.

Connection & Empowerment with Connie Lee Eiland • Saturday, May 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. & Sunday, May 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • This class will improve your connection to Spirit. There will be work with the third and fourth chakras to help clarify and strengthen your personal power and your connection to the web of Life. Included will be time in nature to assemble a medicine bundle which will be used in healing. Journeys, partnered healing, and ceremony are included. $250 until May 3, $300 after. For more information contact Connie at (248) 809-3230, email clshebear7@gmail.com, or visit shewolfshaman.com.

Basic Journeying: The Art of Shamanism for Practical and Visionary Purposes in Daily Life with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, June 13 & Sunday, June 14 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. • The shamanic journey is an easy and powerful tool to access spiritual information. Meet a compassionate spirit or power animal who wants to help you in your life and learn techniques for empowerment, allowing you to move safely, intentionally in a balanced way. This class is prerequisite to advanced shamanic studies. Online via Zoom. $180 per person/$90 for repeat students. For more information contact Judy at info@judyramsey.net.

Grandfather Sun Shamanic Sound Journey with Cacao & Mary Ledvina • Sunday, June 14 • 2 to 4:00 p.m. • Before Father's Day and Summer Solstice, travel to the upper world to connect with the Sun and receive light. There will also be an opportunity to connect with your male ancestors. Experience a sound bath as you receive the healing and/or guidance you need through a guided journey assisted by optional cacao. Doors will be locked at 2:15 pm. sliding scale: $40-$60. For more information contact Mary at (734) 646-9161, email maryledvina@gmail.com, or visit maryledvina.com.

Shamanic Healing for Animals I with Judy Liu Ramsey • Wednesday, June 17, 24, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, August 5, 12, 19, & 26 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • Explore animal healing that draws upon core shamanic practices. Develop a toolkit of techniques through supportive, interactive, and experiential learning from a professional animal communicator who also practices shamanism. Prerequisite: journeying basics. Knowledge of animal communication not necessary. The class is taught via Zoom. $425 per person/$225 for repeat students. For more information contact Judy at info@judyramsey.net.

Five-Day Soul Retrieval Training with Connie Lee Eiland • Tuesday, July 1 through Sunday, July 5 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • This class is for people who want to bring soul retrieval into their practices. Participants will be trained in diagnosis, soul retrieval, and intensive after care. There is an approval process for this training. $450 until June 6, $500 after. For more information contact Connie at (248) 809-3230, email clshebear7@gmail.com, or visit shewolfshaman.com.

Extraction: A Shamanic View of Illness with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, July 11 & Sunday, July 12 • 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Shamanism addresses the spiritual aspects of illness. Identify power loss and explore different ways to address healing. Deepen your understanding of spiritual intrusions and learn ways to extract them. Prerequisites: Basic Journeying, Medicine For the Earth or Healing With Spiritual Light. Class is via Zoom. $300 per person/$150 for repeat students. For more information contact Judy at info@judyramsey.net.

Grandmother Moon Shamanic Sound Journey with Cacao & Mary Ledvina • Sunday, July 12 • 2 to 4:00 p.m. • Travel to the upper world to connect with the Moon and to experience your feminine nature. Experience a sound bath as you receive the healing and/or guidance you need through a guided journey assisted by optional cacao. Doors close at 2:15 p.m. sliding scale: $40-$60. For more information contact Mary at (734) 646-9161, email maryledvina@gmail.com, or visit maryledvina.com.

Healing Curses & Spells with Connie Lee Eiland • Saturday, August 8 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. & Sunday, August 9 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • This class involves recognizing the importance of words and energy for health and well-being. Participants will learn to recognize curses and how to remove them safely. Methods of healing come from Peruvian, Hawaiian, and Tibetan shamanic practices. Soul retrieval is a prerequisite. $250 until July 25, $300 after. For more information contact Connie at (248) 809-3230, email clshebear7@gmail.com, or visit shewolfshaman.com.

Star Nations Shamanic Sound Journey with Cacao & Mary Ledvina • Sunday, May 9 • 2 to 4:00 p.m. • During Perseid Meteor Showers, travel to the upper world to connect with your star family and view our place in this universe. Experience a sound bath as you receive the healing and/or guidance you need through a guided journey assisted by optional cacao. Doors close at 2:15 p.m. Sliding scale: $40-$60. For more information contact Mary at (734) 646-9161, email maryledvina@gmail.com, or visit maryledvina.com.

Spiritual Development

Spirit Through the Years with LaTonya Zibi • Tuesday, May 12, June 16, July 14, & August 11 • 5 to 6:30 p.m. • Guided reflection for adults 50+ to explore spirituality, life experiences, and practical ways to nurture meaning and purpose. Hosted online. $35 per session. For more information contact LaTonya at (781) 832-0166, email spirit.holisticenerqi@gmail.com, or visit spiritbecoming.com.

Stress Management

Be a Tension Tamer with Jenn McFarland • Thursday, May 7, June 4, July 9, & August 6 • 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. • This workshop will teach you practical ways to stop stress in the moment. You'll learn four different techniques and how to incorporate them into your daily life. Hosted online. $50. For more information contact Jenn at (734) 234-8201 or email monarchdawn.jen@gmail.com.

Sustainable Living Skills

Plant Identification and Foraging or Plant Medicine from Indigenous and Western Perspectives with Gabi May • Ongoing Sunday Mornings • Learn to identify plants and learn about their uses in indigenous and western medicine. This class is open to all ages and will involve a leisurely-paced hike at a nature trail in the Ann Arbor area. You will get to know our plant relatives and learn about the amazing things they can do. Exact dates and times are weather dependent. $10. For more information contact Gabi at (269) 271-8797 or email gabi@mysticmay.com.

Natural Building Training Program at Strawbale Studio with Deanne Bednar • May OR July • Experience a variety of natural building skills while living & learning on-site for one month at Strawbale Studio! Classes and hands-on experience in foundation building, round pole framing, thatched and living roof construction, strawbale walls, earth plaster, and cob. Enrichment: experience an earth oven, foraging, mushroom log fruiting, and more! $1250 / $950. Includes room and board. Some partial-pay work trade hours available. For more information contact Deanne at (248) 496-4088, email ecoartdb@gmail.com, or visit strawbalestudio.org.

Work Trade Program at Strawbale Studio with Deanne Bednar • June OR August • Live on-site at enchanting Strawbale Studio and help out (garden, grounds, repairs, office, natural building-related work) in exchange for room, board, and sustainable living skills such as spoon carving, earth sculpting, and more. FREE; 30-hour work week. For more information contact Deanne at (248) 496-4088, email ecoartdb@gmail.com, or visit strawbalestudio.org.

Two-Hour Learning Tour at Strawbale Studio with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, May 9 & 16, Sunday, July 12 & Aug 9 • 10:00 a.m. to Noon • Learning tour of natural buildings at Strawbale Studio! Visit the enchanting structures made of strawbale, earth plasters, living and thatched roof, rocket stove, earth oven. Learn about upcoming natural building and nature craft workshops. Bring a lunch and register for the afternoon workshop if you wish! $20. For more information contact Deanne at (248) 496-4088, email ecoartdb@gmail.com, or visit strawbalestudio.org.

Foraging Plant Walk at Strawbale Studio with Deanne Bednar • Sunday, May 17 • 1 to 5:30 p.m. • Enjoy an afternoon in the woods & meadows at the enchanting Strawbale Studio one hour north of Detroit and meet some awesome plants! Harvest and take some home, free plants where abundant. Food, medicine, cording materials, and more. Consider registering for the two-hour learning tour of natural buildings in the morning. For more information contact Deanne at (248) 496-4088, email ecoartdb@gmail.com, or visit strawbalestudio.org.

Tai Chi, Martial Arts, and Self Defense

Qigong Class with Cyrus Scholl • Ongoing Tuesdays • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • The class teaches you to use gentle movements, stretching, and mindful breathing to bring your body, mind, and spirit deeper into harmony. $12 per class. Drop-ins welcome. For more information contact Zen Buddhist Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Chen Tai Chi Ch'uan with Joe Walters • Ongoing Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Saturdays • 4 to 5:00 p.m. • Unique movement art emphasizing inner stillness and relaxation developed through disciplined whole-body integration and refined awareness. Instruction in stationary stances, coiling exercises, and Chen forms. FREE. For more information contact Joe at annarbortaichi@gmail.com or visit annarbortaichi.com.

Beginners Tai Chi with Master Wasentha Young • Ongoing Mondays from 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. AND/OR Thursdays from 6 to 7:15 p.m. • Tai Chi is a series of postures linked together in a continuous, fluid manner. It focuses on integratingboth physical and mental energy mechanics, promotes relaxation, and enhances the sense of balance. It is often characterized as a moving meditation. Attend one or both sessions per week (down a flight of stairs, no elevator access.) $225. For more information contact the Peaceful Dragon School at (734) 741-0695, email info@peacefuldragonschool.com, or visit peacefuldragonschool.com.

Tai Chi Walking with Master Wasentha Young • Saturday, May 2 • 10 to 11:15 a.m. • There are many ways that Tai Chi helps us to "see" with our feet. Tai Chi Walking simplifies this method to allow individuals to experience this without learning the Tai Chi Form. $30. For more information contact the Peaceful Dragon School at (734) 741-0695, email info@peacefuldragonschool.com, or visit peacefuldragonschool.com.

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Spring Cooking...All About Asparagus

By Lisa Viger-Gotte

Asparagus, the slender green superstar of the vegetable world, is a tasty and nutritious delight. Plant asparagus crowns in sunny, well-drained soil during early spring or late fall, and watch them grow into perennial garden treasures. Patience is key as you'll need to wait a couple of years before harvesting to allow the roots to establish. Once ready, pick tender 6 to 8-inch spears. Loaded with vitamins and fiber, asparagus is a versatile addition to your culinary adventures, whether grilled, steamed, or in a creamy soup. Enjoy its vibrant flavor and health benefits! Find it easily in the spring and early summer at your local farm market or grocery store.

Creamy Asparagus Soup Recipe

Indulge in the creamy goodness of homemade asparagus soup. This comforting bowl of pureed asparagus, onions, and garlic is the perfect way to savor the flavors of spring. Top with plant-based parmesan and chives for an extra touch of deliciousness. Enjoy your homemade creamy asparagus soup. It's a delightful way to savor the fresh flavors of spring!

Ingredients:

1 lb fresh asparagus spears, trimmed and chopped

1 small onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 cups vegetable broth

1 cup almond milk

Salt and pepper to taste

Optional garnish: grated plant-based Parmesan cheese, chopped chives, or a drizzle of olive oil

Instructions:

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and minced garlic. Sauté until the onions become translucent, about 3-5 minutes.

Add the chopped asparagus spears to the pot and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Pour in the vegetable broth and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let it simmer for about 15-20 minutes or until the asparagus is tender.

Using an immersion blender or a regular blender (in batches), puree the soup until smooth and creamy.

Return the blended soup to the pot and stir in the almond milk. Heat the soup over low heat, but do not let it boil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve hot, garnished with grated plant-based Parmesan cheese, chopped chives, or a drizzle of olive oil if desired.

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www.thehealingfeast.org

Slow Farm

Growing Healthy Food and Justice in the Food System

By Sandor Slomovits • Photos Provided by Kim Bayer

Sometime last year I happened to catch a radio interview on Michigan Public's Stateside show. The show's host, April Baer, was speaking with Warda Bougettaya, the owner of a pastry shop in Detroit called Warda Patisserie. Warda mentioned that she buys her strawberries from Slow Farm in Ann Arbor, and she spoke very highly of those strawberries. Actually, that's a vast understatement: raved is more accurate. I was intrigued. I wanted to meet the people and see the farm where people grow such praiseworthy strawberries. So, earlier this year I emailed Slow Farm and asked if I could come visit. Owner Kim Bayer replied quickly and warmly.

In late April, on a mostly sunny, cool morning, with the temperature in the low fifties, I drove out from Ann Arbor on Whitmore Lake Road to Slow Farm. I found Bayer and co-farm manager Magda Nawrocka-Weekes standing at the edge of a large field on the west side of Whitmore Lake Road, near the farm's gate. After we exchanged greetings, Bayer said, "This was a raspberry field, and it's got a cover crop on it now. Magda and I were just talking about what we're planning to do here this summer. We're going to put some flowers at the front and then have a Three Sisters Garden." (Three Sisters Gardens are a legacy of Native American agricultural traditions. When planted together, the Three Sisters (corn, beans, and squash) help each other thrive.)

"We're also getting some blueberry bushes to put in the middle and chickens at the end." I asked if they'd include eggs in their U-Pick offerings. "We're just going to try having a little flock of chickens and see if they survive out here," replied Kim. "Kind of a way of seeing if we should think about having a larger flock. Who doesn't want U-pick eggs?" she added with a laugh.

Then Bayer and Nawrocka-Weekes led me on a tour. "This, the smallest part of the farm, about 15 acres, is where we do most of our work," Bayer said. Pointing east she added, "The overall farm is about 187 acres. I also own across the road and across the freeway. The part across the freeway we don't farm. I've put in a restored native prairie and restored about seven wetlands over there. There's also a twenty-acre woods. That's kind of its own little nature preserve. We do some cultivation across the road. We've got several acres of strawberries, and we usually have had a squash and pumpkin field there. We're planning on doing both of those this year, but here is where we do most of the intensive kind of planting and harvesting. This most southerly field is a two or three-acre asparagus field."

Then, turning and pointing north to a nearby row of small, tentlike structures, Bayer continued: "And this is where we've got most of our little village of shacks." The first one, she explained, is the farmstand tent which includes a self-serve fridge where people can buy the farm's fresh produce, pick up their weekly CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) portions, and weigh and pay for their U-Pick fruits and veggies. Stacked behind it are a couple of other tentlike structures, filled with tools and farming equipment. There are also two insulated sheds which serve as coolers for produce and seeds.

"We don't have any permanent buildings. We've been working out of these temporary structures for the past eight years. (Bayer bought the property in 2015 and started farming it in 2017.) We've been working with the township on getting a permanent building because this way we have to wash our bins and whatever we need to clean outside, bent over with a hose. That's not something that we can do year-round. It'd be really nice to have a permanent facility. That would help our staff a lot."

Read More About Slow Farm online!

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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

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Internal Arts: Taiji, Bagua & Pushhands with Joel Robbins & Inner Culture • Tuesday, May 12, 19, 26, June 2, 9 & 16 AND/OR July 7, 14, 21, 28, August 4 & 11 • 7 to 8:00 p.m. • Explore Chen and Yang Tai Chi, Ba Gua Zhang, and partner exercises to develop body mechanics, coordination, and martial understanding. This class emphasizes practical movement principles and internal alignment through form and interactive practice. Suitable for all experience levels. $125 for 6 classes. For more information contact Joel (734) 315-0573, email joel.innerculture@gmail.com, or visit InnerCulture.org.

Silk Reeling Qigong with Joel Robbins & Inner Culture • Wednesday, May 13, 20, 27, June 3, 10, & 17 AND/OR Wednesday, July 22, 29, August 5, 12, 19, & 26 • 7 to 8:00 p.m. • Silk Reeling Qigong forms the foundation of Tai Chi and emphasizes gentle, spiraling movements that promote relaxation, coordination, and internal power. The class is for students of all ages and experience levels, those new to Tai Chi and Qigong, and those wanting to deepen their practice. $125 for six classes. For more information contact Joel (734) 315-0573, email joel.innerculture@gmail.com, or visit InnerCulture.org.

Qigong and Tai Chi Fridays with Jose Feliz & Jennifer Flynn • Friday, May 29, June 5, 12, 19, & 26, July 10 • 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. • This six-week series offers a gentle, grounding way to build strength, balance, and calm through mindful movement. Each class includes Qigong warmups, foundational Tai Chi, and closes with qigong, acupressure, and a brief mediation. All levels welcome. $90. For more information contact Jennifer at (414) 403-0150 or email rootsofwisdom.acu@gmail.com.

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Dr. Mari Ziolkowski: Tarot Reader • Ongoing Thursdays • 2 to 7:00 p.m. • Highest guided meditative tarot card readings, light language channeling, healing/clearing, and herbal healing divinations. Two to three card "Quick Look": $25 (10 min); Four to five card "Go Deeper": $45 (20 min); Six+ card "Deepest": $65 (30 min); light language channeling: $50-60 (25-30min). For more information contact events@crazywisdombookstore.com.

Nina McDermott: Intuitive Card Reader • Ongoing Fridays from 2 to 7:00 p.m. AND/OR Saturdays from Noon to 7:00 p.m. • Reading a combination of Tarot and/or Oracle cards, Nina uses her intuitive gift to take a deep look into a situation, relationship or question, ofThree 3-card "Simple Spread": $25; Five-card "Deeper Look Spread": $45; Nine-card "Greater Perspective Spread": $65; Two-person reading: $65. For more information contact events@crazywisdombookstore.com.

Mylita Benjamin: Intuitive Guide and Oracle Reader • Ongoing Sundays • Noon to 5:00 p.m. • Mylita uses a combination of cards, clairvoyance, and healing energy to make her readings much more than a divination session! Three-card "Mini Sample Reading": $25 (10 min); "Celtic Cross – Recommended Reading": $45 (20 min); "Relationship Spread" (Two people): $60 (Approx. 30 min). For more information contact events@crazywisdombookstore.com.

Writing and Poetry

Joy in Embodied Journaling with Debra Hopper • Sunday, May 17 • 1 to 2:30 p.m. • If journaling has ever felt overwhelming or flat, this guided session offers a different way in. Join Certified Embodiment Coach Debra Hopper for Joy in Embodied Journaling, a relaxed online experience blending gentle body awareness with playful prompts. Expect curiosity, creativity, and a writing experience that feels freer and more your own. $20. For more information email hello@debrahopperonline.com or visit debrahopperonline.com.

Writing Workshops with Tarriane DeYonker • Saturday, May 23, June 13, & August 15 • 1 to 4:00 p.m. • Writing workshops with rotating themes. Beginning and experienced writers are welcome. This is a hybrid workshop, so attending by Zoom is an option. Registration required. $35. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517) 266-4000 or email webercenter.org.

Yoga

Yoga for Core Integrity Online Course with Christy DeBurton • Starts Monday, May 4 • 4:30 to 5:00 p.m. Are you noticing any of these symptoms in your body lately? Ongoing back pain or tension, poor balance or instability, slouching or posture struggles, sluggish digestion, stubborn weight around your midsection. These are all signs your core may need more support—and the good news is, you can change that. In this eight-week online yoga course, you'll safely (but effectively) strengthen the muscles that support your core—helping you move through life with more ease, stability, and confidence. And yes—there will be plenty of feel-good stretching and relaxation woven in every step of the way. The Yoga Room is a private studio in Ann Arbor offering personalized yoga for anyone seeking a more thoughtful, supportive approach to practice. ere, yoga is not about keeping up or pushing through—it's about slowing down, listening inward, and building a practice that truly supports your body and your life. $140. For more information visit yogaroomannarbor.com.

Open Level Yoga with Michele Bond • Ongoing Sundays from 4 to 5:30 p.m., Tuesdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m., & Saturdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. • Each student is encouraged to honor their own unique abilities and limitations in this mixed level class, with variations offered for all levels. Our method blends the science of biomechanics with an openhearted, uplifting philosophy. Classes are designed to optimally benefit each student, with myofascial release techniques incorporated as needed. $15 if registered for the semester, $20 drop in with instructor's permission. For more information contact Michele at (734) 358-8546, email michele@yogahouseannarbor.com, or visit yogahouseannarbor.com.

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Yoga Stretch with Samantha Lieberman • Ongoing Fridays • 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. • A full-body reset with intentional stretching to release tension and move with more freedom. Drop-in $18 per session. 10% senior discount. Cash or Venmo at door. Bring your own mats. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org, or visit jewelheart.org.

Golden Lotus Hatha Yoga with Golden Lotus Yoga Teachers Association • Ongoing Saturdays • 2 to 3:30 p.m. • Golden Lotus Yoga, founded by Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, a direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda, offers gentle, slow-paced, meditative classes for all levels. Each class includes brief meditation and spiritual guidance, helping you experience greater peace, clarity, and a renewed sense of inner well-being. Donations welcome. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Yoga at Zion Well • See Website for Schedule • Zion Well offers a variety of classes, including gentle, restorative, Yin, and meditative yoga. For those looking for more, they also offer retreats, private sessions, and teacher training courses. Visit zionwell.com for more information.

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FROM OUR ARCHIVES

Circle Pines Center – Not Just Another Summer Camp

By Petula Brown

The Circle Pines Center in Delton, Michigan, distinguishes itself as a getaway locale by offering opportunities to build self-awareness via interaction as well as introspection. Their mission is to promote peace, social justice, environmental stewardship, and cooperation. Through their scheduled family-friendly events (see their online calendar), and children's summer camps, they aim to demonstrate cooperation as a way of life. Become a member of Circle Pines (for $180.00 a year, less for low income families) and you'll get access to early event registration as well as ticket and rental discounts, but you don't have to be a member to have access to this 294 acres of rolling hills, forests, and lakefront property—most Circle Pines events are open to the public and the property is also available for corporate retreats, family reunions, weddings, and community gatherings, as well as being able to accommodate the lone traveler.

The annual Buttermilk Jamboree is a three-day festival in June that provides guests the chance to either camp overnight or visit for the day. With educational workshops, local vendors, a kid's area, and a craft beer/wine tent, the summer Jamboree is a cornucopia of activity that highlights cooperative practices in action. The festival also gives a platform for entertainers to set a celebratory vibe for attendees. Past performers include the indie group Last Gap Collective, folk musician Britt Kusserow, and vintage blues/jazz artist Luke Winslow-King.

September's Midwest Mushroom Camp is an opportunity to explore the area's population of mushroom species. Culinary, crafting, and educational sessions are available throughout the weekend and make Circle Pines a prime destination for mushroom lovers. In October, visitors can experience Apple Cider Weekend. After picking apples from the Center's orchard, guests press them into cider to enjoy during the season.

In addition to scheduled events, visitors can arrange private visits, as well as site rentals. The Center has hosted a variety of activities, including weddings, yoga retreats, and craft clubs, though Circle Pines is particularly interested in events with a focus on social justice or that have a cooperative angle. The property can accommodate 100 people during the summer season and 30 during winter months. Rentals can include use of the Center's kitchen, or catering arranged by Circle Pines is available.

Circle Pines' focus on group experiences is grounded in a philosophy established in 1882. As part of the Central States Cooperative League, its philosophy emphasized economic reform and peace education as well as embracing the cooperative movement of that era. Hosted at the Ashland Folk School in Grant, Michigan for 60 years, the co-op expanded and moved to its current location in 1940. It now makes its home on the property of Stewart Farm in the town of Delton. Operating as a folk school and family camp, over the years Circle Pines members (CPC'ers) have engaged in activism related to civil rights, peace initiatives, and environmental consciousness, illustrating commitment to the Center's primary mission—to show the advantages of cooperation as a way of life.

Circle Pines embraces the natural beauty of forests, meadows, and a beach off of Stewart Lake. Although the Center has over 30 buildings, most blend into the wooded surroundings and have rustic interiors. The hub of activity, the Farmhouse, includes a commercial kitchen, dining hall, library, and meeting rooms. Its eclectic style reflects renovations done by Center members since the early 1900's. Nearby, Swallows Lodge provides heated lodging and close access to the main bathhouse and laundry room. Dispersed throughout the property, cabins (some heated), tent sites, bathhouses, and outdoor toilets supply other accommodation options. Other amenities include picnic tables, fire pits/rings, a wood-fired pizza oven, a stone labyrinth, and a wood-fired sauna. In the spirit of sustainability and economy, overnight guests should bring their own bedding, towels, and toiletries.

As an institution founded to support cooperative and sustainable living, the Circle Pines culinary staff sources locally whenever possible. Mud Lake Farm in Hudsonville provides greens and herbs, Crane Dance Farm in Middleville supplies meat products, and the coffee served at the Center is sourced from Higher Grounds Trading Company in Traverse City. Circle Pines also has a garden, an orchard, and uses wild foods available on the property. The Center's crops include apples, peaches, mushrooms, nettles, and black walnuts.

Given the Center's focus on education and cooperative living, Circle Pines camping programs are well suited to create collaborative and communal opportunities. Three full time staff provides oversight for property management and public relations. There is a seasonal food service staff as well as volunteers. Many volunteers are former campers whose fond memories encourage a desire to give back. Geared toward youth participants, summer camps are the ideal time to introduce cooperative practices such as daily chores, working the camp store, and tending the garden. Campers also enjoy traditional activities like water sports, crafts, and outdoor games so their summer experience is fun as well as educational. On the Circle Pines website, interested parents can download a camp guide and apply for financial aid.

Throughout spring, summer, and fall, Circle Pines programming allows adults to experience its cooperative environment. Workbee retreats and weekend retreats offer free lodging and meals in exchange for labor to complete a variety of maintenance activities around the camp. Interspersed between cooperatively planned work tasks, free time is available to use Center amenities as well as socialize and refresh. The retreats are an ideal introduction to the Center's philosophies as well as an opportunity to engage with the natural beauty that surrounds Circle Pines.

The Center's membership model offers an opportunity to contribute to and influence its initiatives beyond occasional visits. It also reinforces the Circle Pines mission as an organization committed to cooperative living. During non-event periods, the rustic setting and secluded woodlands are well suited to accommodate solo travelers looking for a quiet respite. With the variety of activities, Circle Pines allows visitors to experience an expanded definition of wellness in a beautiful, natural setting.

Circle Pines is located at 8650 Mullen Road, Delton, MI 49046. You can reach them by phone by calling: (269) 623-5555. To find out more information, visit the Circle Pines website, circlepinescenter.org or send an email to: info@circlepinescenter.org.

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Experiencing Spring Through the Senses

By Christine MacIntyre

Spring doesn't arrive all at once. It doesn't knock. It doesn't announce itself. It shows up quietly—like it's not sure it's allowed to stay yet.

Spring is the in-between season. And kids are usually the first ones to notice.

Before the calendar changes, before the jackets disappear, before adults agree that winter is finally over, kids start pointing things out. The light looks different. The sidewalk feels warmer. The air smells like wet dirt, not cold metal. Something has shifted, even if no one can quite name it yet.

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In Ann Arbor and surrounding areas, spring reveals itself in small, almost secret ways—and those clues teach kids something important about the world and about themselves.

What spring teaches us through sound

The city changes its voice first.

Birds return before leaves do. Water moves again. Windows crack open. Laughter carries farther. A bike bell rings down Main Street. Someone practices music near campus, and the notes drift through the air like they've been waiting all winter to be heard.

When kids listen closely, they learn this: sound means we're not alone.

Hearing spring unfold reminds us that others are waking up too—animals,

Hearing spring unfold reminds us that others are waking up too–animals, neighbors, the whole city stretching after a long sleep.

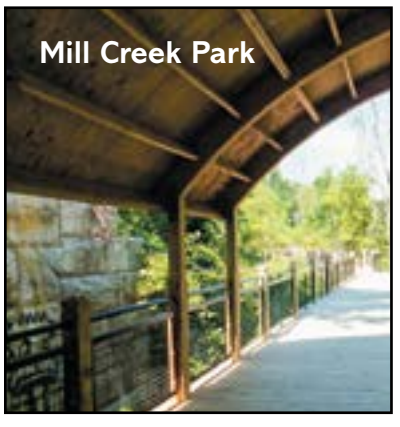
neighbors, the whole city stretching after a long sleep.

Eleva Potter, who leads children's programming through Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation, says spring programming focuses on "lots of changes as nature wakes up from the winter." As the snow melts, she noted, "worms and bugs start to emerge. There is more bird song to hear as birds find mates and make their nests. Frogs and toads start to call."

Even the quietest sounds—wind moving through budding branches, sneakers on damp pavement—become proof of shared life.

As the days warm, new sounds layer in. Skateboard wheels begin to hum and clack at local skate parks. The echo of boards against ramps replaces winter's hush. The rhythm is different—faster, hopeful, a little daring…the sound of someone trying again after a fall.

One peaceful place to practice listening is Mill Creek Park in Dexter where wooden boardwalks stretch gently over the Huron River. The steady rush of water, the creak of boards underfoot, the layered bird calls overhead—it's a natural soundtrack to early spring. A short stroll can feel like a reset button for the mind.



Mill Creek Park

Listening this way teaches kids something powerful: when we pause and tune in, we feel more connected—to nature, to our community, and to ourselves.

Try this: A Neighborhood Sound Walk
Choose one block, one park path, or one stretch of boardwalk. Walk it slowly. For one full minute at a time, no talking. Afterward, ask: What did you hear that surprised you? Was it close or far away? Did it make you feel calm, curious, excited?

Create a community sound map by drawing your street or park and labeling the sounds you hear. Revisit it in a few weeks and notice how it changes.

Spring teaches that listening isn't just about hearing. It's about belonging.

Mill Creek Park is located at 8140 Main St. in Dexter. For more information, call (734) 426-0887 or visit dextermi.gov/government/departments_and_services/parks_and_trails.php

What spring teaches us through sight

Spring doesn't explode into color. It arrives gently. It gathers itself.

Tiny green buds appear before the leaves commit. Moss brightens along tree trunks like a soft highlighter. Sidewalk chalk returns in swirls and hopscotch grids. Storefront windows trade winter's dimness for light.

Eleva Potter from Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation says an exciting part of spring programming is watching the landscape transform. "Buds and flowers appear on trees and start to leaf out," she said. "Spring flowers begin to add pops of color—yellow Trout Lilys, pink Spring Beauties, purple Wild Geraniums, and white Trilliums."

Further afield, wildflower hikes at Draper-Houston Meadows Preserve invite families to walk slowly through meadows and woods where those blooms emerge from beneath last year's leaves. Kids learn that beauty often begins quietly and close to the ground.

At Nichols Arboretum, the ground begins to glow before the canopy fills in. In Kerrytown, outdoor tables reappear like small celebrations.

The Ann Arbor Farmers Market opens for the season, and suddenly color arrives in crates—greens, reds, yellows. Kids can see what's growing now and what isn't quite ready yet. Spring teaches patience through what is in season and what is still becoming.

At Nichols Arboretum, the ground begins to glow before the canopy fills in. In Kerrytown, outdoor tables reappear like small celebrations.

Ann Arbor Farmers Market

Around the city, volunteers gather at Kuebler Langford Nature Area and Furstenberg Nature Area to remove invasive shrubs and protect local biodiversity. Kids who witness this learn something important: caring for the earth is active work. Spring isn't just something that happens to us—it's something we participate in.

Nichols Arboretum is located at 1610 Washington Heights in Ann Arbor. To learn more, call (734) 647-7600 or visit mbgna.umich.edu/nichols-arboretum.

Draper-Houston Meadows Preserve is located at 578 Mooreville Road in Milan. To learn more, call (734) 971-6337 or visit washtenaw.org/366/draper-houston-meadows-preserve.

The Ann Arbor Farmers Market takes place at 315 Detroit Street in Ann Arbor. For more information, call (734) 794-6255 or visit a2gov.org/parks-and-recreation/parks-and-places/ann-arbor-farmers-market.

The Kuebler Langford Nature Area is located at 101 West Huron River Drive in Ann Arbor, and the Furstenberg Nature Area is located at 2626 Fuller Roa. in Ann Arbor.

Downtown invites kids to notice—and imagine

Through the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority Elevate program, local chalk artist David Zinn has created Unseen Adventures of Ann Arbor—a citywide scavenger hunt featuring ten installations of Nadine the mouse tucked into unexpected corners throughout downtown. (See the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* article on David Zinn from Issue #76 at crazywisdomjournal.com/thecrazywisdomjournalonline/2020/12/17/the-whimsical-world-of-david-zinn.)

Families can search for each scene, collect a button at every location they find, and even write their own stories about what Nadine might be doing in each tiny world. It's not just a scavenger hunt: It's a practice in noticing.

Kids learn that big discoveries often hide in small spaces. That imagination lives in cracks in the sidewalk. That art isn't always framed inside a building—it can be under your feet, waiting for you to slow down and notice.

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Ann Arbor DDA Program Specialist Sandra Andrade said the public art installation is designed to spark joy for all ages. "We have some more projects coming up that we're excited about, too, including 'Elevating History: A Mural Series from the Living Oral History,'" she said, noting that additional Elevate installations are anticipated in fall 2026 and spring 2027.

The Ann Arbor Art Center also offers a free mural activity book online that includes a map of local murals, coloring pages, and descriptions of Ann Arbor's public art.

If you head out on a mural walk, invite kids to become art detectives. How big does the mural feel when you stand beneath it? What colors jump out first? What emotions does it bring up? Murals aren't just pictures—they're stories told at full volume.

And sometimes, noticing leads somewhere even smaller.

In Ann Arbor, fairy doors have long invited kids (and grown-ups) to kneel, look closely, and imagine who might live just beyond the brick. Tucked into storefronts and hidden along walls, these tiny portals reward careful eyes.

Fairiologist and Ann Arbor native, Johnathan Wright said there does seem to be a seasonal rhythm to their appearances.

"There does seem to be some correlation," he said. "Much like humans, I believe that the fairies, largely (on a small scale), are more active in nicer weather. But not quite as much parallel with lizards (for example, iguanas falling out of trees in Florida) which leads me to hypothesize that the urban-fairies are not cold-blooded."

It's a playful answer—but also an invitation.

Small art. Small doors. Small details. Big imagination.

Spring teaches that wonder lives close to the ground. That curiosity belongs alongside science. That even in a city of brick and sidewalks, there is always room for something small and mysterious to appear.

Kids don't just see a tiny door. They see a story beginning.

Unseen Adventures spans 10 locations throughout downtown Ann Arbor. Visit a2dda.org/unseen-adventures/ to find a map or call the Ann Arbor DDA at (734) 994-6697 for more information.

The Ann Arbor Art Center is located at 117 West Liberty Street in Ann Arbor. Call (734) 994-8004 or visit annarborartcenter.org for more information.

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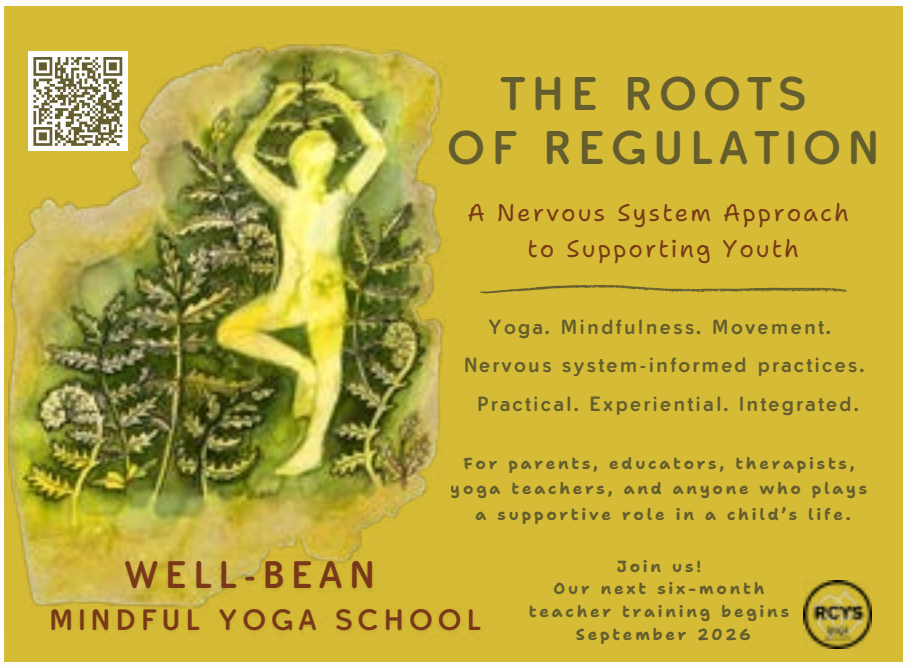
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Spring isn't only something we observe. It's something we join.

In nearby Saline, family bird walks invite kids to slow down and listen for returning songbirds. Teen make-and-take programs offer chances to build planters and craft bird feeders. As the weather warms, the Saline District Library expands nature-focused offerings that help kids explore birding, planting, and seasonal change in playful, meaningful ways.

And as spring settles in, the river begins to call people back, too.

Each April, Argo Park Livery and Gallup Park Livery reopen for the season. While it may still be too cold for swimming, paddling a canoe or kayak becomes its own kind of spring ritual. Birding by water offers a different perspective—quiet, steady, eye-level with the riverbank. Kids might spot herons standing tall in the shallows, turtles sunning on logs, or red-winged blackbirds flashing their bright shoulder patches.

Being on the river teaches something subtle but profound: sometimes the best way to notice nature is to move gently through it.

When kids plant berry seeds and imagine the jam they might make one day, they're learning patience in real time. When they paddle quietly beneath budding trees, they're learning attentiveness. When they name the birds they hear, they're learning belonging.

Spring teaches that we belong to the season—not just beside it.

Visit the Saline District Library at 555 North Maple Road in Saline. Call (734) 429-5450 or visit salinelibrary.org for more information.

Argo Park Canoe Livery is located at 1055 Longshore Drive in Ann Arbor. Call them at (734) 794-6230. Gallop Park Livery is located at 3000 Fuller Road in Ann Arbor. Call them at (734) 794-6240. View Gallup and Argo Livery rental fees, schedule, and reservations at a2gov.org/parks-and-recreation/activities/canoe-kayak-and-tube.

What spring teaches us through smell — and taste

Before the trees are fully green, before the days feel reliably warm, the air shifts.

It smells like wet earth and thawing soil. Like rain on pavement. Like grass waking up. Sometimes it smells fresh and clean. Sometimes it smells muddy and alive.

Spring doesn't smell perfect. It smells real. And that's part of what it teaches kids.

Smell reminds children that growth is earthy and a little messy. That new beginnings don't arrive polished. Mud means something is happening underground. Rain means roots are stretching. The scent of damp bark and river water tells us the world is working, even when we can't see the progress yet.

But spring isn't just something we smell. It's something we taste.

The season shows up in what's on the tables at farmers markets, restaurant specials, and food truck offerings. Early greens. Fresh herbs. Crisp radishes. Asparagus. Foods that weren't there in January. Kids can see what's in season and what isn't quite ready yet. They learn that strawberries don't rush. Tomatoes need more sun. That nature keeps its own schedule.

And as downtown warms, food trucks begin to pop up again. The breeze carries the scent of sizzling onions, warm pretzels, sweet waffles, and tacos on the grill. The smells drift through streets near Main and Liberty. They signal something more than hunger: people are out again. We're gathering. We're lingering.

Spring teaches kids to notice how the weather shapes what we crave. In winter, hot soups and cocoa feel right because they warm us from the inside out. When the sun returns, something shifts. Cold lemonade tastes brighter. Ice cream feels celebratory. A crisp salad feels like relief against warm air.

Taste becomes another way to understand the season.

Why do we want warm, hearty foods when it's cold? Why does a frozen treat feel perfect after an afternoon at the park? Kids begin to see that their bodies are responding to the world around them.

Smell and taste teach that seasons are shared experiences. When you catch the scent of fresh-cut grass, street food, or early blossoms, you're breathing in the same air as everyone around you. When you bite into something grown nearby, you're tasting the same sunlight and rain that shaped it.

It also teaches memory. One deep breath of spring air—or one bite of something that only appears this time of year—can bring back memories of last year's bike rides, park visits, festivals, or walks along the river.

Spring doesn't just look different.

It smells different.
It tastes different.
It feels like a beginning you can breathe in—and sometimes, even savor.

Ann Arbor Skate Park

Kayaking at Gallup Park

Wonder as a way of experiencing spring

Spring in Ann Arbor isn't just about weather. It's about participation.

It's volunteers clearing invasive plants. It's skateboarders testing ramps again. It's farmers unloading early harvest. It's artists chalking stories onto sidewalks. It's kids learning birding basics at Gallup Park or planting berry seeds at a warming hut, imagining the sweetness to come.

That's the quiet lesson spring keeps offering: Pay attention. Look again. Listen longer. Breathe it in.

Kids understand this instinctively. They feel the in-between. They notice the almost-there buds. They hear the almost-loud birds. They smell the almost-warm air drifting through open windows.

Spring doesn't shout its arrival. It whispers it.

And when children learn to recognize spring through sound, sight, smell—and participation—they're learning something bigger than the season. They're learning how to stay curious. How to feel connected. How to trust that change—even when it's small and quiet—is already on its way.

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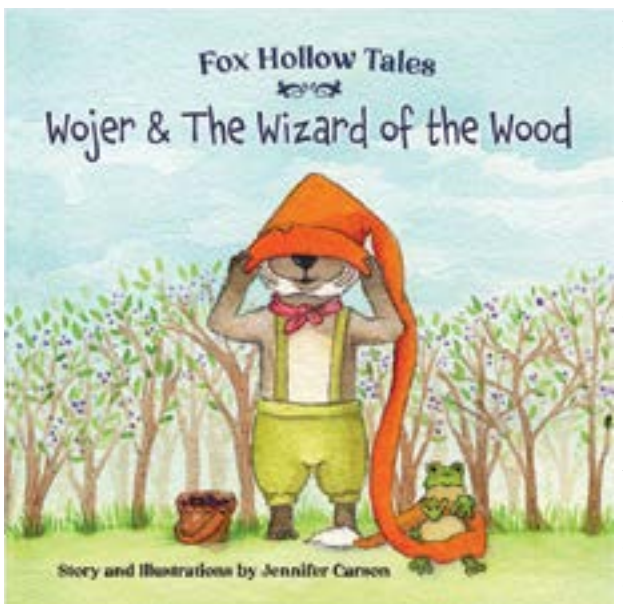

A sweet tale about a young badger who is told by a trio of neighborhood girls that a wizard will turn him into a frog if he goes berry picking in the woods. Indeed, he does meet a strangely dressed gentleman in the woods who looks like a wizard, but this hare does not turn trespassers into amphibians. Instead, the gentleman tells Wojer a story, which inspires the little boy to turn the tables on his tormenters with a humorous prank that brings this tale full circle.

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